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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

W Magazine

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IN FOCUS

Sixteen-foot-tall dichroic glass chandeliers add beauty and iridescent dimension to Sangren Hall's main corridor. Ohio artist John Blazy designed these "Lightcicles."

Dear Friends,

As you read this edition of the *Western Michigan University Magazine*, you'll notice that its stories cover some markedly disparate subjects—among them, an anthropologist's field research in Iran, clinicians who serve children suffering from the effects of trauma and a student's passion to use documentary film to herald, as she puts it, the real-life experiences of others and the beauty of their truth.

At least on the surface, these stories have no common thread. But deeper consideration reveals one. They demonstrate an important principle broadly reflected in the WMU community. That is, using one's talents to transcend self and engage with community. A simple concept, but so vital to our world.

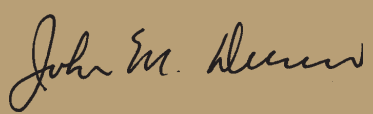
At times, this engagement addresses an ill of society, as in the work of the Children's Trauma Assessment Center at WMU. The center was established 16 years ago so that the tragedy and aftermath of child abuse and neglect would not go unrecognized and untreated. The center's clinicians have trained some 85,000 people to work with traumatized children.

At other times, as with Dr. Erika Friedl's fieldwork in rural Iran, this engagement illustrates the mosaic of human experience by shining a light on customs and cultures that would otherwise be unknown to the wider world. Occasionally, Friedl and her research partner were prevented from entering Iran by its authoritarian government. But the community they've chronicled for some 50 years always welcomed them, saying, "Write this down. Tell the world."

Student Tirrea Billings observed the never-give-up spirit of a peer and was inspired to share his story on film. Now, thousands know about Johnson Simon, a new alumnus who overcomes and even uses the physical challenges of cerebral palsy to pursue his artistry. And Billings' film was honored recently with a national award.

WMU people are compelled to use their talents in meaningful ways, and the world is a better place because of it. Enjoy your reading.

Best regards,



John M. Dunn

President

Four graduate programs among nation's top 50

The latest annual *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of the top graduate programs in the nation shows WMU with seven programs ranked among the top 100 in their disciplines, four in the top 50 and two programs assessed as the best of their kind in Michigan.

In the latest round of rankings released March 16, WMU's occupational therapy program was ranked at No. 32 nationally, making it the state's highest ranking program in that discipline. The University's speech language pathology program, at No. 46 nationally, is tied for recognition as that discipline's best such program in Michigan.

WMU graduate programs ranked among the nation's top 100 are:

- Occupational therapy, Kalamazoo—No. 32.
- Rehabilitation counseling—No. 37.
- Speech-language pathology—No. 46.
- Audiology—No. 48.
- Physician assistant—No. 57.
- Occupational therapy, Grand Rapids—No. 58.
- Social work—No. 71.

All seven of WMU's top-100 programs are part of the University's celebrated College of Health and Human Services. Another eight WMU graduate programs also were highly ranked among graduate programs at the nation's more than 650 colleges and universities that confer master's and doctoral degrees. The additional ranked WMU programs are in: Earth Sciences/Geosciences (113), Public Affairs (115), English (125), History (125), Education (126), Art (131), Clinical Psychology (135) and Psychology (141).

"We have a long history of programs in the health and human service disciplines that enjoy international reputations for quality," says Dr. Susan Stapleton, dean of the WMU Graduate College. "While those programs continue to garner top rankings, we're also pleased to see our graduate programs in several other disciplines moving quickly up the ranking lists. Our graduate program in public affairs, for instance, moved up 34 spots in this year's rankings and is now very close to top-100 status." ■

'WMU Night' at Comerica Park

When the Detroit Tigers take on the Seattle Mariners on June 22, it will be WMU Night at the Tigers' ballpark.

University nights have been a part of the Tigers' home games for years, but this is the first time WMU has been a part of the mix. The event is for alumni, community members, faculty, staff, and current and prospective students.

"We want to pack the stadium," says Christopher Praedel, assistant director of engagement in WMU's Office of Development and Alumni Relations, who is coordinating the effort. "We want the University community to attend, wear their Bronco gear and show a strong WMU presence."

The first 2,500 people who purchase a ticket to the game through mywmu.com/tigers will receive a limited edition WMU-Tigers baseball hat in the University's brown and gold colors. In addition, $5 of the cost of each ticket sold on the site will go to the WMU Legacy Scholarship Fund, available to students who are part of multigenerational Bronco families.

WMU will host a pre-game Bronco Stampede at 5:30 p.m. in Party Plaza 3 of Comerica Park. Party Plazas are located above the Big Cat Court, behind section 321. Sales of tickets for the Stampede event also include Upper Box Infield seats and a picnic buffet. The pre-game Stampede is limited to the first 300 who purchase the package at $59 per person.

Those who purchase game tickets or the Stampede package through mywmu.com by May 1 will be automatically entered into a raffle in which ticket holders will have an opportunity to win a baseball and a photo autographed by Miguel Cabrera as well as a Jose Iglesias-autographed baseball.

For more, including how to purchase tickets, visit mywmu.com/tigers. ■

Flight operations chief named to presidential leadership group

Capt. Russell Kavalhuna, new executive director of flight operations in the College of Aviation, has been tapped to take part in a six-month national leadership development effort called the Presidential Leadership Scholars Program.

Kavalhuna is one of 61 diverse leaders from across the United States who traveled to Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, in February to begin a series of monthly development activities.

The scholars program is an executive-style development initiative that draws upon the resources of the presidential centers of Lyndon B. Johnson, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton and George W. Bush.

Over the coming months, the group is scheduled to travel to each of the presidential centers to meet with and learn from former presidents, key administration officials and leading academics. They will study and put into practice varying approaches to leadership, develop a network of peers, and exchange ideas with mentors and others who can help them make an impact in their communities.

In addition to the group's startup activities, at Monticello and in Charlottesville, Virginia, the group spent its first working weekend traveling to Washington for meetings at the White House and the National Archives. For March, program activities shifted to the George H.W. Bush Presidential Center in College Station, Texas, where the former president and first lady greeted and worked with the participants.

The fellows have been asked to examine leadership models and methods and pick their own leadership project. For his project, Kavalhuna will implement a modernized safety reporting protocol for the College of Aviation that will be adaptable for a wide range of aviation organizations, including other aviation schools. ■

Michigan governor appoints law professor to Flint water crisis committee

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder has appointed WMU Cooley Law School Professor Michael C.H. McDaniel to the Flint Water Interagency Coordinating Committee. McDaniel's three-year appointment is in addition to his role as lead for Flint's Fast Action and Sustainability Team, where he serves as liaison between Flint Mayor Karen Weaver's and Snyder's offices, a post that he was appointed to in early February.

"I am honored to have been appointed by Gov. Snyder to advocate for the city of Flint and Mayor Weaver as a member of the Flint Water Interagency Coordinating Committee," says McDaniel, who is also a retired brigadier general. "We are cooperatively developing our plans and efforts to move forward on lead service line removal."

The 17-member committee will make recommendations to the governor regarding the health and welfare of people exposed to lead, study Flint's water infrastructure and determine potential upgrades, review Flint Water Task Force recommendations, and recommend ways to improve communication between local and state government.

McDaniel is director of WMU Cooley's LL.M. program in homeland security and teaches in the school's constitutional law department. He joined WMU Cooley's faculty after serving as U.S. deputy assistant secretary for homeland defense strategy, prevention and mission assurance. He was also former Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm's homeland security advisor in 2003, serving in that role until he joined the law school faculty. ■

Students and prof take their tax skills to rural Alaska

They might be off the grid and off the road system. But rural Alaskans still received some much-needed help preparing their taxes, thanks to a WMU professor and accounting students.

This is the second year Dr. Fritz Allhoff, associate professor of philosophy, has led a tax-assistance delegation to remote villages in western Alaska. The program is supported by the Internal Revenue Service, an Anchorage-based nonprofit and various tribal associations, as well as a partnership with WMU's Haworth College of Business.

Over eight days in February, Allhoff and the four-student entourage visited four villages—Goodnews Bay, Kongiganak, Kwigillingok and Platinum—filing about 400 tax returns.

They rode around on snow machines, ate whale and walrus, and took steam baths with tribal elders.

"While temperatures were cold, the villagers kept us warm with their hospitality," said Kinsey Staver, an accounting graduate student from Lawrenceville, Illinois.

Other students involved in the excursion, all from Michigan, were Jill Clark of Battle Creek, Andrea Gentile of Livonia and Madelyn Olsen of Fraser. ■

Dunn honored with national 'Giving Back' diversity award

President John M. Dunn is one of 27 college and university presidents and chancellors around the nation being honored with the first Giving Back Award from *INSIGHT into Diversity*, the oldest and best-known publication devoted to diversity in higher education.

According to the publication's editors, the award "honors presidents and chancellors of colleges and universities who go above and beyond their everyday leadership duties to 'give back' to their campuses and communities."

Dunn is featured with other recipients in the Leadership Support and Giving Back issue of the magazine, which may be accessed by visiting insightintodiversity.com and clicking on the April 2016 issue. Additional recipients include the presidents of Columbia, Penn State, Purdue and Wayne State universities.

Other award programs through the magazine include a notable annual award—The Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award, also known as the HEED Award. Now in its fifth year, it's the only national award that honors higher education institutions that exhibit an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout their campus. WMU has won HEED awards for the past three consecutive years. ■

Med school acquires life-sciences innovation center

The Southwest Michigan Innovation Center is now owned and operated by the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine.

The 69,000-square-foot facility located in the University's Business Technology and Research Park was designed to nurture the formation and growth of innovative, entrepreneurial life-science businesses. It is currently home to 18 client companies engaged in a variety of laboratory research endeavors. The SMIC resides in a state-designated, tax-advantaged SmartZone.

"The acquisition of the SMIC is an important step in the medical school's development, especially as part of our research strategy," says Dr. Hal Jenson, dean of the medical school.

"It also helps the medical school meet accreditation requirements for laboratory-based research and a culture of discovery at WMed. The role of SMIC in providing incubator/partnership space for development and commercialization is an important component of the medical school's long-term research strategy."

The SMIC facility will supplement the two research floors at the W.E. Upjohn M.D. Campus by providing incubator/partnership space, which serves to advance research discoveries to commercialization.

It also increases opportunities for research experiences for medical students and residents, which are required for accreditation of the medical school's educational programs. There are currently 11 researchers from companies based at SMIC who are appointed to the medical school faculty. ■

Med school faculty make 'best doctors' in America list

Appearing in *Grand Rapids Magazine* and *Cincinnati Magazine*, several faculty physicians from the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine were listed in Best Doctors in America 2015. Best Doctors in America is an online resource developed by Best Doctors Inc.

Physicians making the list, and who appeared in the December 2015 issue of *Grand Rapids Magazine*, were: Dr. Tim Fischell, Dr. Jeffrey Wilt, Dr. Rashmi Kothari, Dr. Richard L. Lammers, Dr. Jeffrey C. King, Dr. Susan F. Bannon, Dr. Mark Loehrke, Dr. Richard Roach, Dr. Jason W. Roberts and Dr. Colette Gushurst (retired).

Dr. Keith Kenter also is on the Best Doctors list, a listing that appeared in *Cincinnati Magazine*. He previously practiced in Cincinnati before joining the medical school in Kalamazoo. ■

WMU plays host to Great Lakes PeaceJam

The Great Lakes PeaceJam, encompassing the states of Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, returned to WMU this year after a two-year absence. The affiliate was founded in Kalamazoo in 2002 and has received funding support from several Kalamazoo-based foundations and donors.

WMU has been a supporter of PeaceJam for years and, this year, agreed to intensify the relationship.

"As a result, our club can expand the presence of PeaceJam in our region and run upcoming conferences for PeaceJammers," says Dr. Jeffrey N. Jones, associate professor of teaching, learning and educational studies.

The PeaceJam Foundation, which started in Denver, aims to create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities and the world. It works through the inspiration of 13 living Nobel peace laureates who pass on their spirit, skills and wisdom. Additionally, the foundation has developed service-learning programs to equip youth with leadership skills to create positive change in their communities.

As part of the 2016 Great Lakes PeaceJam Conference in March, Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams spoke at WMU about "Creating True Human Security." Williams and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines were co-recipients of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for their work to clear anti-personnel landmine fields and establish an international treaty to ban landmines.

The regional conference at WMU brought together hundreds of high school-age youths from four states for two days of leadership programming. ■

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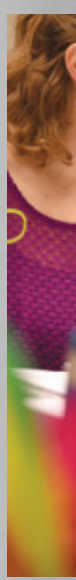
Breaking the cycle of childhood trauma

"In the judicial juvenile system, as many as 92 percent of children coming through the courts have experienced significant trauma. Locking them up won't help if we don't rehabilitate them and empower them. It's a matter of rewiring the brain."

—Dr. Jim Henry, co-founder of the Children's Trauma Assessment Center.



It's a terrible truth that some young lives have been afflicted by abuse and neglect. Without intervention, these children may experience long-term behavior and health problems. A center based at WMU was created to help.

He's just a kid. He's wearing a superhero shirt, and he bounces across the room not unlike a superhero, from wall to wall to window, and occasionally he jumps up on the table or pokes a long stick at the ceiling tiles.

Sitting at the table, leaning back, Frank Vidimos, a clinical trauma interventionist at the Southwest Michigan Children's Trauma Assessment Center at WMU, watches patiently. He speaks in a soft voice. He waits for the 10-year-old boy to calm. He occasionally stops asking questions long enough to join in the play, then slips in another question.

"How much would you say you miss your mom?" Vidimos asks him. "From one to 10, with 10 meaning a lot."

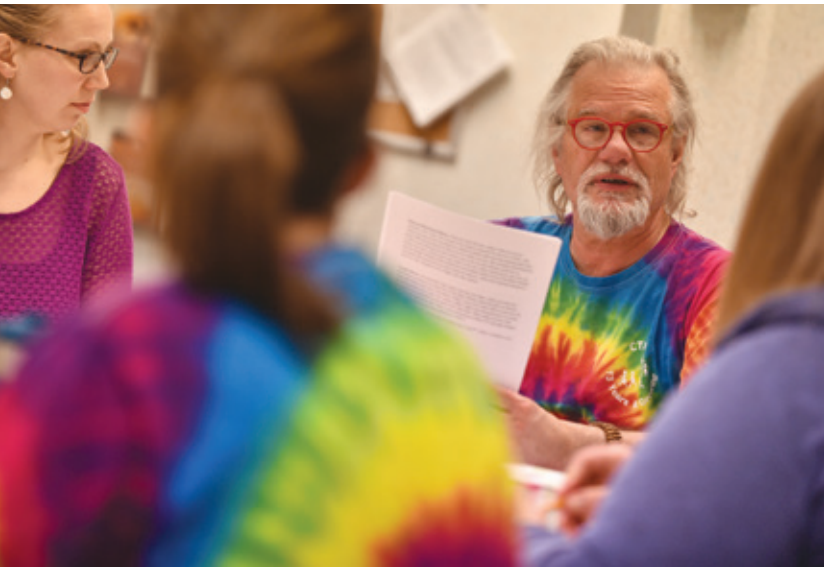
The boy tosses a rubber ball from one hand to the other. "One thousand," he says.

He tosses the ball against the wall—hard. "She knows me, but not my secrets."

Vidimos gets up to draw circles on a white board. "How many circles do people have to get through to reach your inner circle?" he asks. "Two? Three?"

The boy jumps from the table into a bean bag. He reaches for the light switch on the wall and turns out the light. The room disappears into darkness.

Out of the dark the boy's voice pipes up. "Sixty."



Project Director Jim Henry and the CTAC team

The Children's Trauma Assessment Center, CTAC, opened in 2000, providing comprehensive assessments for children ages birth to 17 years who have experienced some form of trauma. This trauma may include prenatal exposure to alcohol or drug abuse, physical or sexual abuse, neglect, or family or community violence.

85,000

TRAINED BY CTAC to work with traumatized children.

Often, the children the CTAC team sees have been removed from their family homes, and the state department of human services, a residential treatment center, foster-care agency or similar organization has requested an assessment.

These assessments include parent and caregiver interviews and reports; a physical exam with a screening for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder; developmental testing for intelligence, attention span, memory, language, gross motor and fine motor skills, sensory processing and social communication; and a psychosocial interview with the child. The assessment also includes observations of caregiver and child interactions. Finally, recommendations for treatment and services are provided to the agency that referred the child.

With this comprehensive assessment in hand, the hope is that those who provide care—caseworkers, therapists, foster parents, birth families, teachers and other relevant individuals—do so with an understanding of the child's trauma history.

Helping caregivers appreciate the effects of trauma, and meeting the child's needs accordingly, is why CTAC was founded.

"I spent 17 years working with Child Protective Services, and during that time, I realized we didn't understand how trauma impacts a child's brain," says Dr. Jim Henry, who co-founded CTAC with Connie Black-Pond (clinical director), occupational therapy Professor Ben Atchison, Dr. Mark Sloane (behavioral pediatrician) and speech pathology and audiology Professor Yvette Hyter.

"We were treating misbehavior without looking at its root causes."

CTAC staff members and interns assess children to understand how trauma has affected their development, behavior and social-emotional health.

Henry and Black-Pond sent out 300 surveys across 15 counties in southwest Michigan to gain an understanding of the needs for treating traumatized children. They received 260 responses, and they were convinced that opening a center that would advocate for kids with a transdisciplinary approach was acutely necessary. In a short time, CTAC was at capacity with a five-month waiting list.

Black-Pond

Today, along with running the center in Kalamazoo, both founders travel the country providing training to others wishing to open similar centers.

"We speak at schools, to therapists, judges, state representatives, mental health workers, anyone who works with children," Henry says. "In the judicial juvenile system, as many as 92 percent of children coming through the courts have experienced significant trauma. Locking them up won't help if we don't rehabilitate them and empower them. It's a matter of rewiring the brain."

To date, 85,000 people have been trained by CTAC to work with traumatized children, Henry says. The center, which is funded through fees for services as well as grants and private contributions, also has participated in training 10 assessment centers to do similar work across Michigan.

Therapists at the Kalamazoo agency Family & Children Services are among those who have been trained in a trauma-informed approach.

"It was a really good way to enhance our treatment," says Rina Battani, a clinical supervisor at the nonprofit organization. It specializes in services that aid families, including foster-care and adoption services as well as counseling.

Its therapists use the trauma screening process to identify problems children may be experiencing, such as difficulty with cognition or sensory processing that can, in turn, present in behavior as "acting out."

"We've been doing trauma treatment with kids for a long time, but the tools that we learned in the screens validated that in a formal way," Battani says.

Changing the lens

On staff at CTAC are social workers and clinical interventionists, occupational therapists and speech-language pathologist supervisors, a pediatrician, and, currently, nine interns.

Interns come to CTAC from WMU, and there have been hundreds of them. Students in nursing, speech-language pathology, social work and occupational therapy train in every aspect of the assessment process and observe the children through two-way mirrors.

Gretchen Slenk began at CTAC as an intern during her master's degree studies, but later returned to staff as a clinical trauma interventionist. That was nearly three years ago.

"That year as an intern here was the hardest of my life," Slenk says.

"I had to open my heart, because you can't do this work without an open heart—but then every day, it gets broken. Complex trauma robs a child of one of the most basic human needs. The children we work with often don't feel loved. They don't feel loveable. But I knew I didn't want to live in a world in which children don't feel loved, so I kept coming back."

Slenk calls those moments when interns make the connection between childhood trauma and adult issues "aha moments." That is when the healing begins, she says.

"When kids have a trauma history, we have to change the lens. We have to change the way we interpret behavior. It's not willful misbehavior, manipulating or being naughty," Slenk says.

When not addressed, childhood trauma can result in depression and mood swings, withdrawal, sleeping difficulties and hyper vigilance. It can also lead to behavior problems, sometimes leading to criminal activity.

Gretchen Slenk, left, is a critical trauma interventionist at the Children's Trauma Assessment Center. Danielle Mott is an intern who is pursuing a graduate degree in social work.

"When children are traumatized, it eventually affects the entire community. We've all interacted with it, whether we realize it or not. It can be hard to see the hurt 6-year-old in the 35-year-old convict, but he's there. The earlier we can reach children, the sooner we can change that lens. When we come to know their stories, then we can begin to help change them."

Kristin Putney, a clinical trauma interventionist, focuses her attention more on the parents and caregivers.

"It's easy to judge the parents and take a punitive approach, but we need to understand that they have often been traumatized, too," she says. Putney is working with a team on developing a parent coach model.

"We need to remember that there is often an intergenerational cycle to abuse. A lot of our work is building trust with families, to assess and then teach the skills they need. Parents want to love their children. They don't always know how."

At the conclusion of every Friday, staff gathers for a meeting. Everyone takes a turn, sharing with others their observations and recommendations for the children with whom they have worked.

Frank Vidimos tells the story of the little boy in the superhero shirt who couldn't sit still. The boy had witnessed a relative's suicide attempt. He was sexually abused, over and over again, by an older youth, but considered him a friend because he gave him a toy. His mother didn't, couldn't, save him because of her drug addiction. He blamed himself—for all of it.

Vidimos recounts: "He said he had a good day today, and he didn't want to leave his pal. I asked him who his pal was."

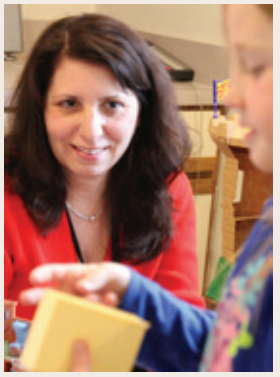
Vidimos breaks off for a moment and swallows hard. For perhaps the thousandth time, his eyes are wet. The boy had pointed to him.

To learn more about CTAC, or to donate to support the center, visit wmich.edu/traumacenter or call (269) 387-7073. ■

Healing through trauma therapy

CTAC clinicians provided critical support for the development of a Kalamazoo agency's Trauma Assessment and Treatment program

When adults struggle with traumatic experiences or mental health and substance use disorders, their children can become the next generation to experience them.



Battani

For decades, Family & Children Services in Kalamazoo has been assisting individuals, children and families on their recovery journeys. Those numbers are growing.

Court-ordered privatization of Michigan's child welfare system has increased the number of traumatized children coming into the agency's foster-care program.

"Children come to the agency bearing the neurological, emotional and behavioral effects of physical, sexual and psychological abuse," says Rina Battani, a clinical supervisor at the agency.

Battani heads up a team of trauma therapists who were trained by Dr. Jim Henry and Connie Black-Pond from the Children's Trauma Assessment Center.

The agency's Trauma Assessment and Treatment program was an initiative made possible through private and foundation funding in direct response to the increase in the numbers of children coming in to the foster-care program.

Therapists may choose to conduct a trauma assessment to help guide treatment. The child is interviewed using evidence-based instruments to determine level and type of need. In addition, the child's caregiver participates in screenings to provide a holistic view of the child, from intellectual and motor skills to psychosocial and sensory capabilities. These give a sense of what's going on with the child and help the therapist to accurately diagnose problems.

Depending on the outcome of these screens, the child may be referred to a specialist for further evaluation or testing, such as a psychologist or occupational therapist, Battani says.

"Trauma treatment is the place where children connect with their feelings—happy, sad, scared and worried—for the very first time," she says. And since traumatized children typically cannot regulate their emotions, she notes, "we help them learn ways to calm and cope with their emotions."

When people don't understand traumatized children, they can unknowingly do more harm, she adds. "There are all kinds of triggers."

> **"Trauma treatment is the place where children connect with their feelings—happy, sad, scared and worried—for the very first time."**
>
> **—Battani**

For example, a child who has suffered physical abuse in the past may be sensitive to physical contact of any kind. A gentle hand placed on a shoulder to get their attention during playtime may trigger a dramatic reaction.

Battani says part of treatment is learning what those triggers are and how to cope with them. In this, the therapists are not only helping children, they are aiding the caregivers. "We meet with relatives and foster parents and may involve school staff or daycare providers in the treatment plan. The goal is to connect the people who can best help and support the child recovering from trauma."

During treatment, children learn skills for relaxing, calming and regulating their emotions, Battani says, and they tell their story to a "safe adult," ideally, the caregiver.

"It's amazing how powerful these stories can be." ■

Painting Dreams

Student filmmaker recognized for documentary on peer with cerebral palsy.

Tirrea Billings elevates stories on film. Johnson Simon does wonderful things to canvas with paint.

Their two passions converge in Billings' documentary, "Painting Dreams: The Story of Johnson Simon."

Recently recognized with a national award no other WMU student filmmaker has achieved, the film showcases Simon's quest to overcome, through his craft, the challenges of cerebral palsy. At the same time, it showcases Billings' talent for storytelling.

As a youth, cruelly and frequently teased because of his condition and treated in school as though he also had an intellectual impairment, Simon once concluded that he did not want to live anymore. Until he discovered his talent.

Student filmmaker Tirrea Billings with artist Johnson Simon

"That kept me positive all the time. That really changed me," he explains in Billings' film. "Art is what makes me, me."

The film captures Simon layering canvas with paint in a studio at WMU, at times using to artistic advantage the spasticity of his hands and fingers caused by cerebral palsy.

"Sometimes when I'm doing just a painting, I spasm… But in some way, it shows an interesting brush mark, which is unique," says the West Palm Beach, Florida, native who graduated in December.

Billings recognized the beauty and inspiration of Simon's life experiences after the two met at a student organization's Bible study. A storyteller in multiple mediums, she initially wrote about her peer for an English class assignment, but knew she also wanted to capture him on film.

"'Painting Dreams' is about an inspirational, kind-hearted, motivated individual who does not look at his cerebral palsy as a setback, but rather as a reason to be even more motivated in pursing his dreams," says the senior from Saginaw, Michigan, who is studying film, video and media studies at WMU.

"Simon continues to break the stereotypes of college students with disabilities, and is living testimony that nothing is impossible. And, most importantly, he illustrates what it means to never, never give up," she says.

The film is currently a 10-minute documentary that she is expanding to feature Simon's December 2015 graduation at Miller Auditorium and to depict life with his family.

"I love documentary films because I am moved by the real-life experiences of others," she says. "Films are like visual books. I want to share those visions and those stories with the world. There is so much beauty in truth, and I want to capture that beauty in my documentaries."

In February, her hard work earned special recognition. "Painting Dreams" received an honorable mention in the Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Media Arts. The

In the student documentary category, Billings received an honorable mention in the 2016 Broadcast Education Association Festival of Media Arts. The highly competitive contest attracted a record 1,538 submissions.

competitive festival is open to individual BEA faculty and student members, and it witnessed more than 1,500 entries this year. Prizes were awarded in April during BEA's annual convention in Las Vegas.

"I never imagined getting a national award so early in my career," Billings says. "The BEA film competition is extremely competitive, and I am honored to be the first to receive an award in WMU history! Not only is this validation that I am definitely pursing a career that I was meant for, but it also gives me the motivation to keep advancing my skills in documentary filmmaking."

Dr. Jennifer A. Machiorlatti, professor of communication and Billings' mentor, says that by pursuing documentary filmmaking, the undergraduate is on a path not many students choose.

"It's a very specialized profession that certainly doesn't have the income potential of broadcast or fiction feature films," Machiorlatti says. "But documentary educates, informs, uplifts and gets people involved with their communities. These films change lives, and Tirrea is already well on her way to becoming a talented storyteller and community activist."

"Simon continues to break the stereotypes of college students with disabilities, and is living testimony that nothing is impossible. And, most importantly, he illustrates what it means to never, never give up."

—Billings

After receiving her diploma from next December, Billings plans to seek a graduate degree in documentary filmmaking and journalism from DePaul University in Chicago.

Meanwhile, Simon also plans on attending graduate school, where he will study to be an art professor or an art therapist with an emphasis in painting.

To view Billings' film featuring Simon, find it online at youtube.com/watch?v=tFpMTpQ15VU. ■

Occupational therapy major Tanya New works with an elementary student balancing on a therapy ball. SOAR program clinicians say that learning while moving optimizes learning potential.

Helping Young Learners 'SOAR'

The walls in an elementary classroom are often awash with colors and shapes, a sensory feast of collages and posters that underscore lessons in language, math and other disciplines.

More than just eye-catching, these creative displays are designed to support learning, and they do.

But the walls in a classroom that's been turned into a WMU-run occupational therapy clinic at a Kalamazoo elementary school are conspicuously blank. And this, too, is designed to support learning.

For students who are atypically sensitive to visual stimulation, walls covered in bright displays are distracting, even arresting. They may feel anxious without being able to articulate why, and so need periodic breaks from that environment.

"It's sensory overload for some kids, so they may shut down or act out," says Dr. Ann Chapleau, associate professor of occupational therapy.

"As occupational therapists, we recognize that there could be something going on neurologically. There could be sensory-processing challenges."

Chapleau explains that some youngsters—not just those who have a developmental disability—have trouble regulating sensory input. Their sensitivity may be to sights, sounds, smells or tactile stimulation, or to a combination thereof. On the other end of the spectrum, a child may be sensory-seeking, always in need of stimulation.

Difficulty with sensory processing, an area of expertise in the occupational therapy profession, can hinder learning because the child's focus is on his or her sensory need and not, perhaps, on the schoolwork at hand.

"If students cannot attend and focus, you can tutor them for two hours a day, but they are not going to improve academically," Chapleau says.

Sensory processing is one of the learning-related issues addressed by the Student Occupations for Academic Readiness, or the SOAR, clinic. The clinic uses principles from occupational therapy to help children at Kalamazoo's Northeastern Elementary School achieve their learning goals.

The clinic is funded by the Kalamazoo Center for Youth and Community. This nonprofit targets the Eastside and Eastwood communities of Kalamazoo, partnering with WMU, the Kalamazoo Public Schools and 17 other organizations to provide evidence-based youth programs to improve student behavior, socio-emotional skills, school attendance and academic performance.

SOAR gives upper-level WMU occupational therapy students their first field experience, as they assess learning styles and work one-on-one with Northeastern youngsters.

The elementary learners benefit from the latest techniques that address deficits in sensory processing, vision processing, fine and gross motor control of hands and limbs, and other foundational skills.

"We're looking at each child from a holistic perspective: What's impeding this student's learning?" says Margy Hunter, a WMU occupational therapy instructor who oversees the students in the SOAR clinic. She developed the program with Chapleau and Sam Lealofi, Kalamazoo Center for Youth and Community's executive director.

The program has documented students' academic gains.

It's not playtime

Observing the SOAR clinic/classroom, activity inside may not be what one would expect of a typical classroom.

"A lot of the activities we do may look like play and, in a sense, they are because that motivates the children to participate; but everything we do is planned and addressing a specific skill," says WMU student Laura Alexander.

SOAR developers say that hands-on methods of learning abstract concepts—such as new words—increases retention of newly learned content and makes learning it fun. WMU student Ben Hayati is pictured leading a fun learning exercise.

The activities the college and elementary students do together underpin things like handwriting, attention to task, socialization and self control. Reading and numeracy are mixed in, as actvities may require students to read and comprehend directions to complete a task, for instance, or use numbers in some way.

This current crop of WMU students has been working with the younger learners since January.

Alexander says she's already observed some advancements in behavior and abilities. One of the key skills they help children with is attention to task, she says, and that relates back to sensory processing.

Some of the children they work with are less "sensory responsive," and so don't react, or attend, to stimulus in an expected way. Other children demonstrate "sensory-seeking" behavior. A sensory-seeker may be constantly fidgeting or drumming fingers or, when problematic, possibly "acting out" disruptively in some way.

"Many students are not on the extreme of these scenarios, but they have unique sensory-processing needs that take assessment and specific strategies to enhance learning," Hunter says.

"For example, a student may be less responsive to information presented verbally and may not make sense of a teacher's directions and appear to be disinterested" when the actual issue is the child is having difficulty processing the verbal information.

She says students may need extra input, such as highlighted overlays, that go beyond the typical written material.

Adults may notice some degree of sensory sensitivity or sensory-input needs in themselves and, consciously or not, have developed strategies to

cope. Using herself as an example, Chapleau says she's more on the sensory-seeking end of the spectrum. While concentrating, she finds herself tapping a foot to expend energy.

An office worker who is sensitive to ambient noise may need to work in an enclosed office, so as to not be distracted by co-workers' conversations, clicking keyboards or noisy office equipment. Another individual may need to get up and walk around throughout the day.

In a classroom, however, students are generally expected to sit still, pay rapt attention and concentrate for prolonged periods.

Hunter says the SOAR OT clinic works to help students and teachers understand sensory-processing strategies, to offer classroom opportunities for movement, music and specific tools that may allow for the best learning environments for all learning styles.

"We work to move toward a positive experience for all students in school even when they seek extra sensory input: fidgeting, drumming fingers or acting out disruptively are all examples of behaviors that can be addressed through a combination of sensory and behavioral strategies utilized by SOAR OT clinicians," Hunter says.

Hunter works with a student on balance. She says research indicates that stimulating the vestibular system (sense of balance) and proprioceptive system (related to position and movement) prior to learning new concepts helps ready the brain for focus and learning.

"We're looking at each child from a holistic perspective: What's impeding this student's learning?"

—Margy Hunter, WMU occupational therapy instructor

Innovative interventions

The clinic is stocked with tools of the trade. Hunter reveals their stash on a recent afternoon after school. There was putty for sensory-seeking students who benefit from tactile stimulation. There were noise-blocking headphones that eliminate ambient noise. They have special necklaces called "chew necklaces" that students can chew on to stimulate a specific nerve related to movement and position in space.

Some of these tools are used in the clinic; others are incorporated into a child's everyday classroom.

For instance, a physio ball may replace a stationary seat for a student who finds that gentle movement helps with concentration. As the student balances on the inflated sphere, he or she can focus on classwork versus an unmet need to move.

WMU student Heather Duyck worked with children in the clinic last year. She says it was rewarding to see the impact of interventions.

"One first-grader, he just wanted input all the time. So in the classroom, he was constantly fidgeting and trying to put things in his mouth.

"I gave him a wiggle seat (which is flat on one side and round on the other, allowing the sitter to shift in chair). I also gave him a necklace with a toy on the end, that looks kind of like a teething toy" that he could chew on for passive stimulation.

Over time, she says, "he was able to focus a lot better."

Lealofi says that half of the children in the first SOAR cohort—all identified in 2012 as at the highest need for academic improvement—graduated from the program last June with above-grade-level reading as well as learning skills to help them maintain academic growth. And all students made meaningful gains in what officials call "goal attainment scaling."

"Bottomline," Lealofi says, "this program works."

Mitch Hawkins, principal of the school, characterized the OT support as one more example of removing any known barrier and providing any known support to academic achievement.

"It's a practicum, so it provides WMU OT students with experience, but it also provides supports and resources that our kids would not have without Western's program," he says.

"Ultimately, what we're seeing is the supports provided are allowing our teachers to be better at meeting the learning needs of our students."

For more on sensory processing, Chapleau recommends the book "Living Sensationally: Understanding Your Senses" by Dr. Winnie Dunn. ■

Kennedy Center bound

A dance work performed by 13 dance students has been selected in regional competition to be showcased at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., when the American College Dance Association holds its national festival in June.

"The illusion has been just a dream," a work choreographed by dance Associate Professor Carolyn Pavlik, was selected for the honor when the ACDA's East-Central Regional Conference was held on WMU's campus in early March. Of 48 dance works performed at the regional event, only three were selected to go on to the national festival in D.C.

Pavlik's winning work was inspired by Charles Manson and his followers and explores ideas of manipulation and control, retribution and regret.

The ACDA East-Central adjudicators, Elizabeth Gillaspy, Millicent Johnnie and Christopher Morgan, described the work as "an exceptionally well-crafted, engrossing and chilling work that examined a disturbing historical subject and brought it to light in a fresh and innovative way through character development and compositional craft."

They also noted that in a time when incidents of mass violence are more commonplace than any would wish, the dance "emphasized Manson's larger effect on a community of people, making the work historically relevant and timely."

The biennial ACDA National Festival showcases dances selected by professional adjudicators at each of the 12 regional conferences. Dances are selected based on their outstanding artistic excellence and merit, and on the national level, highlight the outstanding quality of choreography and performance being created on college and university campuses. WMU is in ACDA's East-Central Region, which is made up of universities and colleges in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

This is the fourth time WMU dancers have been invited to participate in the national festival. Other invitations and the works showcased were: "Foreground" in 2012, a work by the inaugural WMU National Choreography Competition winner, Lauren Edson; Professor David Curwen's "The End" in 2006 featuring CGI projections by Kevin Abbott; and a special invitation to perform Paul Taylor's seminal work "Three Epitaphs" in 2002. ■

SCENE ON CAMPUS

This striking scene captures a moment from "The illusion has been just a dream," choreographed by dance Associate Professor Carolyn Pavlik. The work was inspired by Charles Manson and his followers. It explores ideas of manipulation and control, retribution and regret. The judges who selected this work to be performed at an American College Dance Association festival in June said it, "managed to capture both the magnetic and disturbing qualities of Manson's character, while shedding light on the time period in which the events took place."

A group of WMU students helped a researcher discover surprisingly high levels of salt in a Kalamazoo lake.

A **Salty** Dilemma

Ongoing research by a WMU expert in aqueous geochemistry is demonstrating how the road salt that protects motorists from perilously icy roads also poses problems of its own for inland lakes, hampering the oxygenating process that occurs during lake mixing.

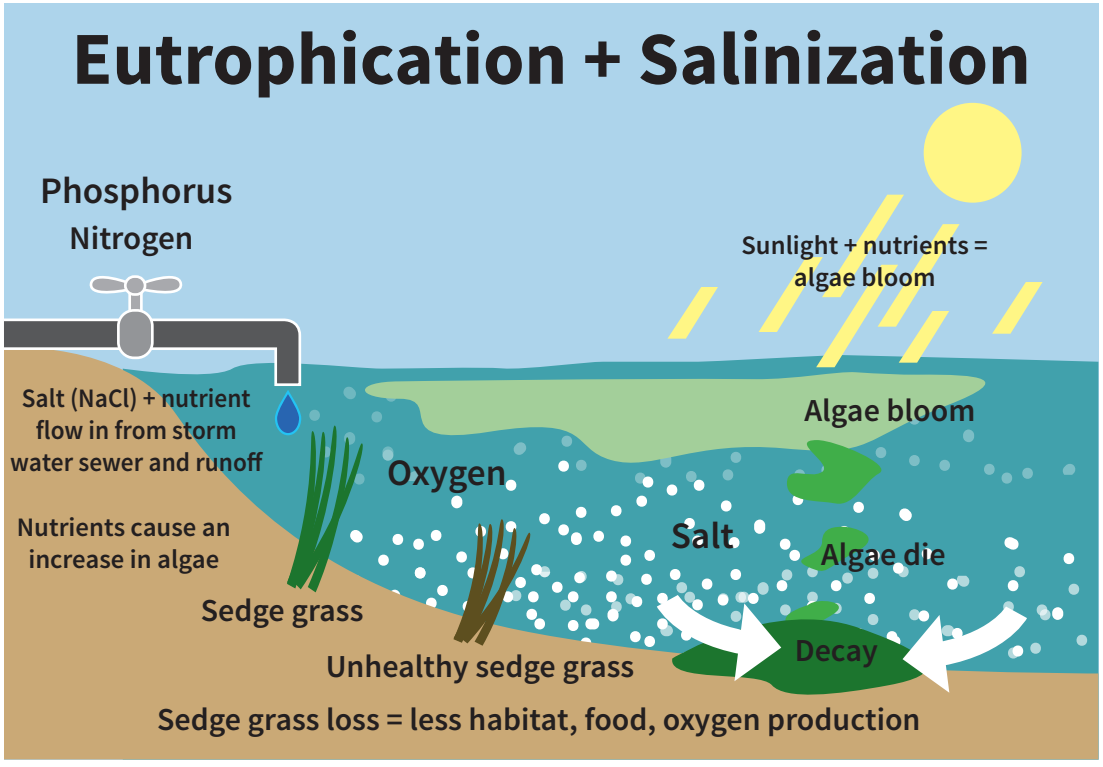
Koretsky

Dr. Carla Koretsky and her student research team have found that high levels of sodium chloride—road salt—can work together in lakes with another environmental malady to create dead zones, a threat to aquatic ecosystems.

She suspects what they discovered in two urban lakes in Kalamazoo is occurring in urban lakes in other communities across the United States that also must salt their roads. Studies by researchers in New York and Minnesota suggest as much.

"People think of road salt as incredibly benign because you can eat salt," says Koretsky, a professor of geosciences and dean of the Lee Honors College.

"But there are a lot of downstream effects of using an excessive amount of chloride on the roads."



Salinized surface water

As winter gives way to spring each year and salt-treated ice and snow melt, the salt doesn't just disappear. Like wintry precipitation, road salt ends up in lakes, rivers and streams because chloride is highly soluble in water. In fact, it's so soluble that hydrologists use it, in chemistry parlance, as a "conservative" tracer.

"If they want to know where water went, they will use isotopically tagged chloride," Koretsky says. "Where water goes, so goes the chloride."

Concerns about chloride salinizing surface water systems is not new; it's something government agencies and other researchers have been investigating for some time with the increased use of road salt.

According to the USGS, urban stream contamination has risen rapidly in the past two decades as a result of widespread roadway salting. In 2014, the agency reported that in northern regions of the country, chloride levels were up substantially in 84 percent of streams it monitored. Analysts also found that chloride often exceeded levels considered toxic by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency water-quality standards.

"There are a lot of ecosystem effects that have been studied," Koretsky adds. "It's very clear that chloride has both chronic and acute toxicity effects for aquatic organisms.

There's also research that shows chloride can make heavy metals more "bio-available" to organic creatures, and decrease biodiversity in an ecosystem.

But Koretsky was not initially aware of chloride's role in potentially impeding lake mixing, and found that there has not been a lot of study into the problem. She says to fully appreciate this ill effect, one first must understand eutrophication, a process the researcher has been studying in some Kalamazoo-area lakes for the past six years.

Greened waters

Eutrophication is a fancy word to describe lakes overloaded with nutrients—including phosphorus and nitrogen—typically as a result of runoff from surrounding land. In eutrophic lakes, algae begin to proliferate because of those nutrients. Lake Erie is famous for its large algal blooms and their toxic repercussions.

With their scummy appearance, algal colonies can ruin the aesthetics of a lake by turning portions an unsightly green. But more than that, Koretsky says, thick blooms block sunlight and suck up dissolved oxygen when they die and decay. This deprives other vegetation, such as sedge grass, of oxygen and also sullies habitat for aquatic creatures.

As algae continue to proliferate, a body of water—or zones of the water—can become hypoxic, meaning it contains less than

2 milligrams (less than 2 parts per million) of dissolved oxygen.

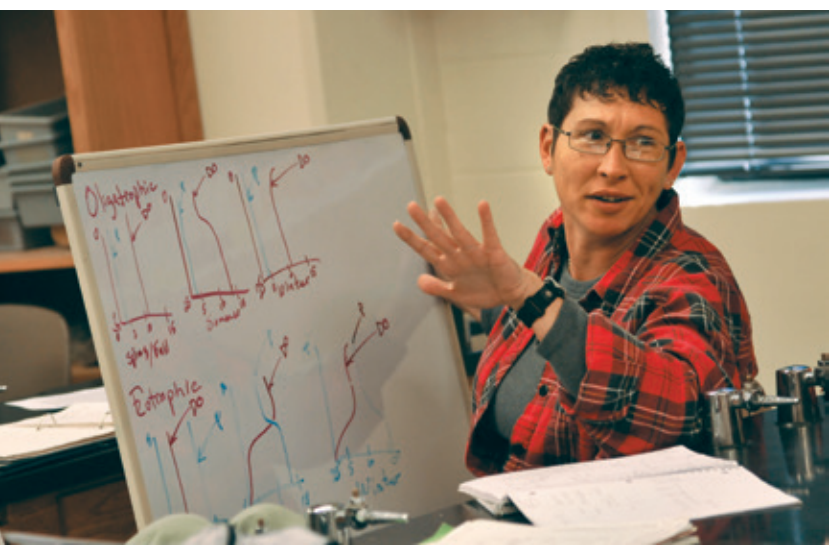
"Once you get to hypoxic conditions, you can start to see fish kills," Koretsky says, adding that "you can go even lower, to anoxic conditions—there's no oxygen left."

Since 2009, her research team has been analyzing two urban lakes in Kalamazoo—Woods Lake in a city park and the WMU-owned Asylum Lake that's part of the Asylum Lake Preserve. The team also analyzed Brewster Lake, a rural lake located in a nature preserve 30 miles northeast of Kalamazoo.

Woods Lake, which has a surface area of about 24 acres and maximum depth of 46 feet, is surrounded by a neighborhood but also near businesses and heavily trafficked roads.

A mile west, Asylum Lake is in a woodland, but also near businesses and busy roads, including the U.S. 131 highway. This lake is much larger and a bit deeper than Woods Lake, with a surface area of some 65 acres and max depth of about 52 feet.

Asylum, Brewster and Woods lakes have each experienced some degree of eutrophication, according to Koretsky's research, and exhibit subsurface algal colonies as a result.



In monitoring visits to Asylum and Woods lakes over several years, the research team found water at the top of each lake to be well-saturated with oxygen, with the maximum amount of dissolved oxygen between eight and 14 feet, depending on the lake.

But thereafter, they found that oxygen levels dropped.

"People think of road salt as incredibly benign because you can eat salt, but there are a lot of downstream effects of using an excessive amount of chloride on the roads."

—Koretsky

"If it's summertime and if I'm a fish and I would like some oxygen, I'm stuck at the top of the lake because the bottom of the lake is anoxic at this time of the year," Koretsky says. "Why is it anoxic? Because of algal blooms that produce all this organic matter, as that biomass decays, oxygen is being pulled out of the water."

Anoxic zones essentially become a toxic soup because oxygen-deprived bacteria in the water can switch from aerobic to anaerobic respiration. This is a neat trick, but it also has some nasty byproducts, including ammonia, sulfide and phosphate.

But the saving grace for eutrophic lakes—and the variety of species that call them home—is a natural mixing process that eventually delivers oxygen to the lake bottom. Midwestern lakes are typically "dimictic," meaning they are twice mixing.

Nixing the mixing

In autumn and in spring, dimictic lakes mix from top to bottom because changes in temperature create changes in water density. Cool water is denser than warm water. So in autumn, as surface water cools, it becomes increasingly dense and descends.

"The water is literally turning over," Koretsky says.

As it turns over from top to bottom, these mixing events help remove the ammonia, sulfide and other potentially toxic compounds from the lake bottom. And oxygen penetrates the depths.

But here's where salty water can nix this mix. Salty water also is denser water, descending all the way to the lake bottom.

"If you have salty water, you can change the density structure in these lakes, which can (affect) whether or not they can physically mix," Koretsky says. "That is very concerning because of the oxygen delivery that happens in the turnover events."

In Woods Lake, the research team found that oxygenated water descends but seems to get stuck, rarely descending below 28 feet. And they attribute that to dissolved chloride, concentrated enough to inhibit and even halt the turnover.

"So you basically have this permanent anoxia, this permanent saline layer at the bottom of the lake," Koretsky says.

While not as acute as in Woods Lake, dissolved chloride levels still appear to be problematic in Asylum Lake.

"What we think is happening in Asylum Lake is we get kind of a sluggish turnover. It happens some years, but not other years, but probably depends on weather conditions and the water coming in," Koretsky says.

So what to do it about it?

Is dilution the solution?

Applying other types of deicers and more efficient use of road salt are some alternatives, though sodium chloride appears to be the most effective at deicing.

"We can use a lot less sodium chloride salt. We can be more efficient about how we use it," Koretsky suggests. "There are some parts of the country where they don't use sodium chloride because fisheries are very sensitive, or because there's so much snow that you can't keep up with it."

With cost-cutting and efficiency in mind, some communities combine sodium chloride with sand so that they're using less salt. Some places also have supplemented road salt with constituents thought to be more benign, namely beet juice and even cheese brine.

Calcium magnesium acetate also is used as a deicer, but it's costlier and, again, not as effective as sodium chloride. Also, acetate can contribute to the nutrient loading in lakes.

"In terms of remediation, there are not a lot of good options," Koretsky concludes.

"It's hard for me to see how we can get out of this fix. (Sodium chloride) makes roads safer, and there aren't really easy cheap alternatives. And once you have the salt in the water, it's hard for it to come out, depending on the (body of water). It's not like overnight it's going to be gone."

"People used to think that dilution was the solution to pollution, but we have come to realize that this is not the case," the researcher asserts.

A sprinkle of road salt's deicing history

Using sodium chloride as a road deicer goes back almost 80 years in the United States. *National Geographic* reports that Detroit, with its rich salt mines, was the first city in the world to use it on iced-over streets in 1940.

The practice caught on, and salting has increased in the United States over ensuing decades just as highways and paved surfaces increased.

Today, America is the world's second largest producer of salt, processing 40 to 50 million tons of it annually, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Last year, the USGS reported that 46 percent of the salt consumed was used for deicing highways, making driving safer for everyday motorists as well as supporting continued commerce across roads that might otherwise be difficult to traverse, or even impassable, during snow and ice events. ■

She says that in southwest Michigan, sodium chloride dissolves, enters surface and shallow subsurface water, and eventually finds its way to Lake Michigan.

A group of U.S. and Canadian researchers found that chloride levels have increased measurably in all of the Great Lakes.

"Chloride levels in Lake Michigan have risen since 1900 or so, reaching maximum levels in recent years," Koretsky says. "Recent increases, in particular, were largely attributed to the use of road salt for deicing." ■

Cautionary hope for a resilient butterfly

There is reason for hope, but between the one-two punch of unfavorable human activity and the onset of adverse weather, the monarch butterfly population that migrates annually between Mexico and North America has had to demonstrate extraordinary resilience to survive.

After several years of devastating declines, the butterflies rebounded the past two years. Then an early March snowstorm that brought wind and several inches of sleet to their overwintering home in Central Mexico dealt the insects their latest blow.

Malcolm

The full impact of the storm on monarch numbers remains to be seen, but footage following the storm showed some monarchs dropping listlessly from their roosting spots in trees to a frosty forest floor. This was ahead of the migration north that began in March and continued into early April.

"It's just one thing after another for monarchs. If it isn't humans, then it's the weather. It is disturbing," says Dr. Stephen Malcolm, a WMU professor of biological sciences who has been researching monarchs, and the milkweed they feast on, for 33 years.

Twenty years ago, the overwintering population of monarchs covered as many as 18 hectares, or 44 acres, in Mexico, according to the National Commission of Protected Natural Areas in Mexico. The population has almost continuously declined since then.

In addition to deforestation in Mexico, habitat destruction in the United States, mainly due to high-intensity agriculture, monocultures of genetically modified crops such as corn and soybeans and the widespread use of herbicides, has taken a toll. That has resulted in the elimination of milkweed and nectar-producing plants that the butterflies need to feed their offspring and fuel their long journey, Malcolm says.

That's why it was so hope-inspiring that monarch numbers rose this past winter.

"At the end of February, it was exciting to see that the butterflies had increased the area of overwintering in Mexico," Malcolm says. "Two years ago, they were down to a low of 0.67 hectares (about 1.7 acres), which is catastrophic and everybody was extremely worried. Last winter, it almost doubled to 1.13 hectares, and this winter it really rebounded to 4.01 hectares, which is as good as it was in the 2010-11 winter. So everybody was very excited about that."

The insect's resurgence may be thanks to the strong El Niño weather pattern, which resulted in a mild winter overall. Last summer also featured favorable conditions as monarchs built up their population numbers in North America before their journey south to Mexico.

"It wasn't too hot, plenty of rain, so the milkweeds did well and butterflies bred well. The migration worked really well last year, which probably led to the decent numbers in Mexico," Malcolm says.

So weather also can be beneficial to monarchs. And humans, too, have a role in improving life for the winged creatures, both by curtailing certain activities and promoting others, the WMU researcher says.

Last spring, spurred by a presidential memorandum, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency announced goals and strategies for improving the health and numbers of pollinators. In addition to reducing honey bee colony losses and other goals, the pollinator protection task force also calls for boosting the monarch butterfly population through U.S. and international actions.

"There's a lot of concern about losing pollinators. Honey bees are invasive species, but we love honey bees because we love honey, and we love the services they provide for pollinating our fruit trees and lots of other insect-pollinated crops. Honey bees are very important economically in North America," Malcolm says.

Along with monarchs, honey bees have declined possibly due to pesticides and other environmental factors. Another big challenge to pollinators, he says, is the elimination of diverse plant life across vast swaths of land that instead host single food crops, such as corn or soybeans.

"There aren't decent nectar resources or pollen resources for these beneficial insects… So I think we need to address that kind of agriculture and have much more set-aside land that's available for favoring the diversity, particularly the diversity that benefits us," Malcolm says.

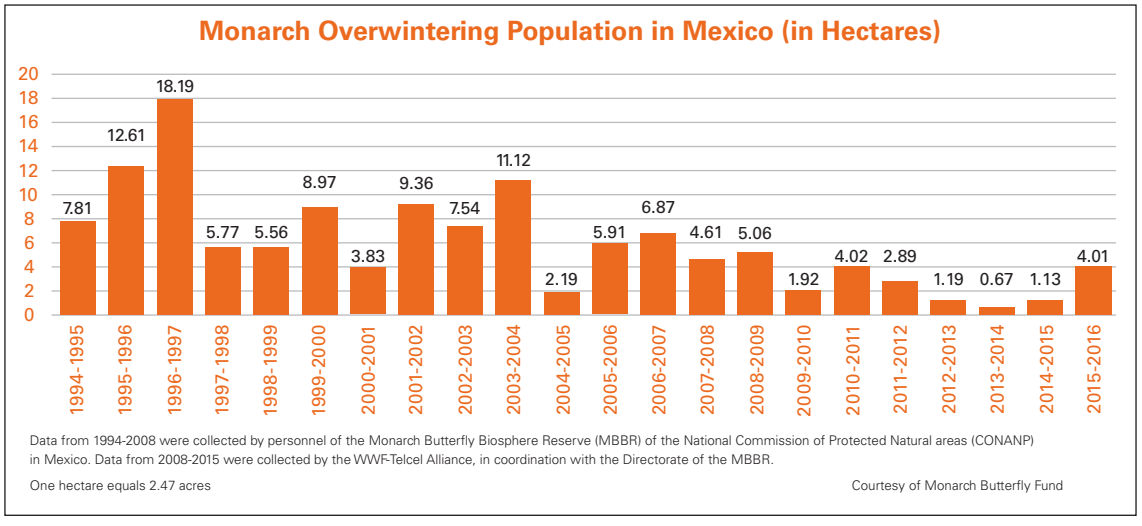
"Obviously, you have to feed people and you have to feed them efficiently and effectively and economically. I think it would be great if this presidential commission and the actions taken by (government agencies) would promote a more holistic view of agriculture."

What can you do?

Beyond farming, individuals can plant native species of milkweed to enhance the environment for monarch butterflies, particularly during the breeding season in summer from June through September. Growing non-native species of milkweed—milkweed varieties that are not indigenous to the areas in which they are planted—can have an adverse affect on the butterflies.

In August, September and October, it is also a good idea to grow nectar flowers for the butterflies, especially native species at which monarchs can feed and build their fat reserves to fuel migration and overwintering, Malcolm says.

"If the butterflies have access to native flowers, particularly flowers in the daisy family (Asteraceae), then that gives them a real boost for fueling themselves for their migration. They get really fat when they start migrating, and so, they're constantly coming down to feed on the nectar in these flowers. And that's very important for them." ■



Data from 1994-2008 were collected by personnel of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MBBR) of the National Commission of Protected Natural areas (CONANP) in Mexico. Data from 2008-2015 were collected by the WWF-Telcel Alliance, in coordination with the Directorate of the MBBR.

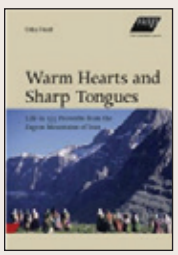
One hectare equals 2.47 acres

Courtesy of Monarch Butterfly Fund

Inside Iran

"A wise person knows everything and asks about everything; an unwise one doesn't know and doesn't ask."

A father in an Iranian village once uttered this local adage in the presence of anthropologist Dr. Erika Friedl. The man was both excusing the boldness of his inquisitive son and taking pride in the lad's desire to know more about a life and culture outside his own.



The youth had been asking about America. And the WMU professor could hardly take umbrage; she and the boy were of the same mind and habit. Her own curiosity and desire to learn about life and culture in Iran has carried her to the boy's community repeatedly for 50 years, most recently last summer.

As a self-described "impolitely inquisitive stranger," Friedl has experienced Iran—at least in some remote tribal areas—as few other Westerners have. She lived in the country for seven years and learned Farsi as well as Luri, a local language. She can speak of witnessed marriage rituals, of the rhythm of daily existence in remote places, of the workings of the bureaucracy and public health services, of schools, of life and death, wealth and poverty.

It's the stuff that anthropologists relish witnessing and revealing, particularly in a nation that has been internationally isolated and under authoritarian rule.

Thus, the conversation with father and son and the proverb shared didn't go unrecorded. They're featured in Friedl's latest book, "Warm Hearts and Sharp Tongues: Life in 555 Proverbs from the Zagros Mountains of Iran," published in 2015 by New Academic Press.

'Sharp tongues'

There's no governing principle or moral thread running through the work, but this assemblage of proverbs gives readers insight into the philosophy of life in Sisakht, a mountain community in southwest Iran that served as the now-retired professor's occasional home and field lab over the course of five decades. The area is about 700 miles south of Iran's capital city Tehran.

"I'm going for the cultural context, for the ethnographic context," she says. "For me, the ethnography unfolds in stories."

Ethnography is a scholarly representation of the traditions of peoples and cultures. Friedl's scholarship has centered on the economics, religion, history, customs and songs of Sisakht, as she witnessed it grow from a small village to a town of some 5,000.

Her previous books explored the lives and stories of women, storytellers and children. "Warm Hearts and Sharp Tongues" reflects Sisakhtis' affinity for word play and witticisms. But deeper than that, the bon mots, wry observations, cautionary maxims and idiomatic expressions have a unique way of casting light on the culture and people that gave rise to them.

Each of the 555 proverbs, spanning such topics as health, home life, marriage, death and religion, is accompanied by a discussion of its cultural context.

"Forty days in love, forty years sorry" for instance, speaks to the perils of marital union based on romantic love versus arranged matrimony rooted in social standing, economic viability and compatibility. "Your mother is wise, she put iron on your body" compliments one's wise maternal upbringing, referencing a time when mothers would place a small piece of iron on baby clothing

to ward off malevolent spirits. "A rooster doesn't sleep, a lentil doesn't rise," is tantamount to "that's just the way things are."

But this insightful compilation almost didn't happen.

A hazardous occupation?

Friedl says the book owes its existence to her inability to re-enter Iran in the mid-2000s. Traveling there proved difficult following the election of Mahmud Ahmadinejad, a president whose tenure began in 2005 and, some say, served to further isolate the nation.

Friedl in a group of women in Sisakht, Iran

In 2006, the Iranian government refused to grant visas to Friedl or to her husband and fellow anthropologist Dr. Reinhold Loeffler.

But the Iran specialist wasn't thwarted for long. She circled back to copious field notes that covered decades of encounters. What insights could she find?

"Lo and behold, I had hundreds of sayings that had come up in the course of conversations," she says. "Otherwise, I probably never would have found the time" to compile and analyze them.

Being denied entry is an occupational hazard for an Iran specialist from the West. Since beginning their fieldwork in 1965, the couple has experienced alternating periods of ease and difficulty obtaining visas. Iran is famously regarded as closed-off to some foreigners and, to this day, has no diplomatic relationship with the United States.

The couple began anthropological research there a year after Friedl earned her doctorate from the University of Mainz in West Germany. The newly minted Ph.D. was eager to begin ethnographic fieldwork somewhere in the world and chose one of the Middle East's most populous nations.

"Iran was fascinating because almost nothing was known—inside or outside of Iran—of the tribal people in the remote mountain regions," she says.

"The other reason was extremely mundane. We had very little money, and you could drive to Iran from Germany, which we have done throughout our many, many travels to Iran, a trip that takes several days if you drive morning until night."

Friedl also was interested in the lives of women, who she says were understudied everywhere, but especially in the Middle East.

"They didn't have what we now call a 'voice,' largely because no one listened to them… Since I was living there and living with women—this is a gender-segregated society—I found what they thought and how they lived fascinating. It was one thing to write academically about their lives, but it was much more interesting and revealing to tell some of their stories," she says.

The anthropologists found the people they lived among to be warm and welcoming. Colleagues, however, thought they were a little crazy for spending so much time in the country given the chilly relationship between the American and Iranian administrations. The U.S. state department, even today, warns American citizens against travel to Iran due to the specter of detention.

"We were always warned: 'It's too dangerous.' 'Why are you going there?' But nothing ever happened to us in this way," she says. "Politically, and in every other respect, there was nothing that we could not handle… Every time we got a visa, it was just fine being there."

Perhaps surprisingly, they were in Iran just after the revolution despite the "death to America" refrain in Tehran. Several dozen U.S. diplomats were taken hostage in the embassy in late 1979 and not released until January 1981.

But Friedl says, "That was probably the best time (to conduct their anthropological research) because (government officials in Tehran) hadn't figured out yet how to deal with people like us. They were not suspicious. They didn't think we were spies. They left us alone."

That had not been the case when the previous administration under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi was in power. "We always were watched very carefully. It was a constant battle with Tehran over research conditions," she says.

'Warm hearts'

But once Tehran-based bureaucracy was dealt with, the researchers experienced little trouble in the rural areas they inhabited. The people they lived among were hospitable and, importantly, interested in their stories being told.

"From the very beginning they understood completely who we were and what we were doing," Friedl says. "They framed us as the resident anthropologists. They would come and say, 'Write this down. Tell the world.'"

Continuing in that vein, she is working on her next book. It will feature songs of Sisakht.

Friedl is the E.E. Meader Professor Emerita of Anthropology at WMU. A Distinguished Faculty Scholar, she retired with emeritus status in 2000 after 31 years. She has authored seven books on Iran, including "Women of Deh Koh: Lives in a Persian Village," a work recognized as a notable book by the *New York Times*. ■

In Print: WMU Authors

Gunpowder Percy

(Bagwyn Books, 2016)
By Dr. Grace Tiffany

Four hundred years after the death of William Shakespeare comes a tale of early modern intrigue, religious obsession and Machiavellian statecraft based on true events and set in Shakespeare's world and time. Grace Tiffany's bold reimagining of the Gunpowder Plot follows Thomas Percy, an eccentric Catholic gentleman who derives increasingly mad inspiration from Shakespeare's plays about his ancestors' rebellions. Percy comes to believe that Shakespeare is speaking directly to him, and finally, insanely, that he himself is the reincarnation of the dead warrior Hotspur from Henry IV. Inspired, he joins a group of disaffected Catholics that includes the mysterious continental traveler Guido Fawkes, the notorious rebel aristocrat Robin Catesby, and the deeply conflicted Jesuit priest Henry Garnet. Together these men, and the women who love them, embark on a quest to destroy a Protestant king and parliament and return the nation to a holy medieval past.

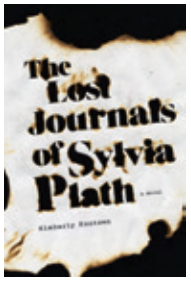
Tiffany has served on WMU's faculty since 1995. In 2010, she received a Distinguished Teaching Award.

The Lost Journals of Sylvia Plath

(Northern Illinois University Press, 2015)
By Dr. Kimberly Knutsen

Set in the frozen wasteland of Midwestern academia, "The Lost Journals of Sylvia Plath" introduces Wilson A. Lavender, father of three, instructor of women's studies, and self-proclaimed genius who is beginning to think he knows nothing about women. He spends much of his time in his office not working on his dissertation, a creative piece titled "The Lost Journals of Sylvia Plath." A sober alcoholic, he also spends much of his time not drinking, until he hooks up with his office mate, Alice Cherry, an undercover stripper who introduces him to "the buffer"—the chemical solution to his woes.

Wilson's wife, Katie, is an anxious hippie, genuine earth mother, and recent PhD with no plans other than to read People magazine, eat chocolate, and seduce her young neighbor—a community college student who has built a bar in his garage. Intelligent and funny, Katie is haunted by a violent childhood. Her husband's "tortured genius" both exhausts and amuses her.



The Lavenders' stagnant world is roiled when Katie's pregnant sister, January, moves in. Obsessed with her lost love, '80s rocker Stevie Flame, January is on a quest to reconnect with her glittery, big-haired past. A free spirit to the point of using other people's toothbrushes without asking, she drives Wilson crazy.

Exploring the landscape of family life, troubled relationships, dreams of the future, and nightmares of the past, Knutsen has conjured a literary gem filled with humor and sorrow, Aqua Net and Scooby-Doo, diapers and benzodiazepines—all the detritus and horror and beauty of modern life.

Knutsen, a professor of English at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon, earned her doctorate in English from WMU in 2005.

Civil War Nurse Narratives, 1863–1870

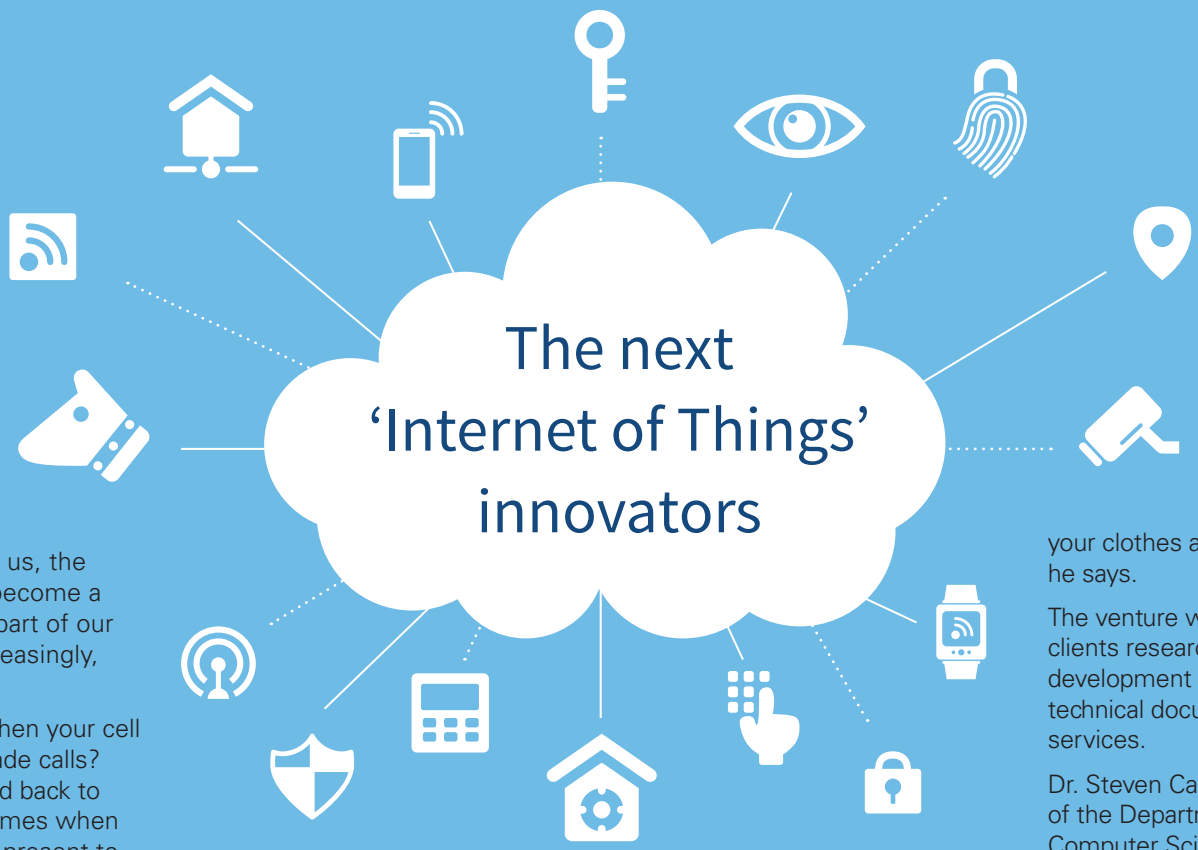
(University of Iowa Press, 2015)
By Dr. Daneen Wardrop

"Civil War Nurse Narratives, 1863–1870," examines the first wave of autobiographical narratives written by northern female nurses and published during the war and shortly thereafter, ranging from the well-known Louisa May Alcott to lesser-known figures such as Elvira Powers and Julia Wheelock. From the hospitals of Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia, to the field at Gettysburg in the aftermath of the battle, to the camps bordering front lines during active combat, these nurse narrators reported on what they saw and experienced for an American audience hungry for tales of individual experience in the war.

As a subgenre of war literature, the Civil War nurse narrative offered realistic reportage of medical experiences and declined to engage with military strategies or Congressional politics. Instead, nurse narrators chronicled the details of attending wounded soldiers in the hospital, where a kind of microcosm of U.S. democracy-in-progress emerged. As the war reshaped the social and political ideologies of the republic, nurses labored in a workplace that reflected cultural changes in ideas about gender, race and class. Through interactions with surgeons and other officials they tested women's rights convictions, and through interactions with formerly enslaved workers, they wrestled with the need to live up to their own often abolitionist convictions and support social equality.

By putting these accounts in conversation with each other, English professor and author Daneen Wardrop explores a developing genre of war literature that offers refreshing insights into women's contributions to the war effort.

Wardrop has served on WMU's faculty since 1990. She was named a Distinguished Faculty Scholar in 2013, the University's highest award for a faculty member.



The next 'Internet of Things' innovators

For many of us, the Internet has become a fundamental part of our lives and, increasingly, our things.

Remember when your cell phone just made calls? Cast your mind back to more primal times when you had to be present to crank up the furnace. And recall the uncertainty of taking your teen's word that he obeyed the speed limit versus monitoring real-time data from his Internet-connected car.

Still do most of those things the old-fashioned way?

Not for long, experts say.

To somewhat appropriate a line from a Matrix movie, the Internet of Things will have you.

More and more, objects and devices—our things—will be embedded with sensors enabling their interconnection through the Internet. These devices can gather almost any kind of data about their surrounding environment, including temperature, light, sound, time, movement, speed and distance.

Through a new Internet of Things, or IoT, venture at WMU, students in the computer science and the electrical and computer engineering programs learn how to write the software that forms the basis for connected embedded tech devices and then use their skills on behalf of clients.

Though still in its infancy, as the venture matures, students will operate a full-scale consulting and development operation that specializes in IoT systems.

"To me, it's very gratifying because you can write a line of code (for a software application) and see tangible results right away" in hardware, says Pete Shutt, a junior and computer science major taking the course associated with the venture.

"Embedded systems have been around for a long time, but with the Internet of Things, it's making (objects) smarter because all of a sudden you can get a text message from your dryer saying your clothes are done," he says.

The venture will offer clients research, design, development and technical documentation services.

Dr. Steven Carr, chair of the Department of Computer Science, says the goal is to get students to operate in a business-like environment where they take on different business roles.

Students currently involved are being mentored by software engineers from medical device maker Stryker Corp. as well as helping to advance some Stryker projects.

"The most valuable thing we have to offer is the talent that is here at the University. Our students have amazing talent," says Dr. Ala Al-Fuqaha, the computer science professor leading the embedded systems venture.

"We believe that we can cater to the needs of companies."

The venture, which launched in January, is a partnership between the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and Waldo Library, where students hang their embedded tech shingle and will, perhaps, develop some new Internet of Things systems for University Libraries, too.

"With the IoT lab, we will also be an incubator for new and emerging technologies, and can work on developing and delivering smart IoT solutions for the libraries," says May Chang, associate dean of University Libraries.

Computer science senior Zachary Jarman signed up for the experience to expand his skills beyond software development.

"Embedded is definitely growing because there is more of a need for it. And there aren't as many embedded developers as there are application (developers). It's a whole different level of complexity," he says.

For more information about this venture, contact Al-Fuqaha at ala.al-fuqaha@wmich.edu or Chang at may.chang@wmich.edu. ■

College by College ...

Haworth College of Business

New summer youth camps focus on entrepreneurship, finance

Two new summer camps offered through the business college will introduce high school students to entrepreneurship and finance through fun, thought-provoking activities and instruction. Both camps will be taught by WMU faculty.

The first camp, "Beyond the Lemonade Stand: An Entrepreneurship Experience," is set for June 28 and 30. This camp is for students entering grades 10 through 12 who have started a business or thought of starting a business. Register at wmich.edu/startinggate/camps.

The second camp is scheduled for July 18-22. "Dollars and Sense: A Finance Camp for High School Students" is open to students who have completed grades 8 through 12. The camp is sponsored by Sanford Advisory Services, so it is offered at less than one-fifth the actual cost. Register at wmich.edu/financecamp. ■

Graduate College

Graduate student research read worldwide

Scholars from all over the world—including Germany, Australia, Nigeria, England, India, the Russian federation and many locations in the United States—are downloading articles written by WMU graduate students.

The Hilltop Review: A Journal of Western Michigan University Graduate Student Research, edited by Rebecca Straple, a doctoral candidate in English, has had more than 134 papers downloaded nearly 150,000 times at a rate of about 200 downloads per day.

Conceived and sustained by the Graduate Student Association, *The Hilltop Review* offers a sampling of original, significant findings, artwork and poetry by graduate students at WMU.

The most downloaded article is "Academic Achievement of Children in Single Parent Homes: A Critical Review" by Dr. Mark Barajas, who earned his doctorate in counseling psychology in 2015. Barajas' article has been downloaded 70,263 times.

Find every issue of the journal online at scholarworks.wmich.edu/hilltopreview. ■

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Researcher's breakthrough algorithm key for precision medicine

Saeed

The work of computer science professor and researcher Dr. Fahad Saeed recently was highlighted by the National Science Foundation and recognized as a breakthrough in the world of mass spectrometry-based protein research.

The article, "Surfing for algorithms," showcased Saeed's research on how to reduce the deluge of data produced by mass spectrometers analyzing proteins.

The article appeared in the online publication sciencenode.org, which is funded by the National Science Foundation and CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research.

Saeed, who also is director of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Parallel Computing and Data Science lab, found a way to speed up large-scale protein analysis by 100 times. He and his doctoral student Muaaz Awan did so by dismissing conventional assumptions that all data in the mass spectrometry-based protein research is relevant. Instead, they searched for ways to identify only the relevant data.

"We wanted to find a way to sift through all the 'noise' in these huge data sets in protein analysis," Saeed says. Called MS-REDUCE, Saeed's algorithm reduces the irrelevant data points in the large data streams, accomplishing in an hour what typically takes three days. "We hope this sets the stage for personal and precise medicine, making analysis of proteins and identifying related health issues faster and more affordable," he adds. ■

College of Health and Human Services

Bettering substance use screening, intervention

A team of researchers has received a $526,192 grant to improve substance use screening and boost intervention and referral services.

The grant, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, was awarded to Dr. Tiffany Lee-Parker, assistant professor in the WMU Specialty Program in Alcohol and Drug Abuse; Dr. Stephen E. Craig, associate professor of counselor education and counseling psychology; and Denise Bowen, assistant professor of physician assistant.

The project's major initiatives include training counseling and physician assistant students. More than 100 students will learn substance use screening and referral techniques, take part in a videotaped role-play exercise and be followed through their internship or clinical experience and for one year after graduation.

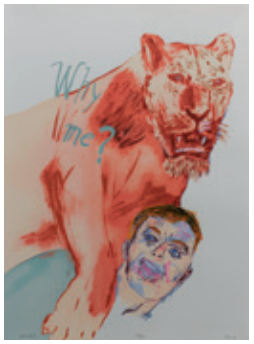
The project also will offer free workshops on substance use screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment to hundreds of health care professionals. And a four-hour online training program will extend training to professionals in other parts of the country.

WMU is among the first to obtain funding to train counselors, psychologists, social workers, child protective investigators, foster care workers and other professionals.

The methodologies go beyond just identifying a problem. The training uses motivational interviewing techniques, leveraging a client's motivators for change. If appropriate, they are then referred to the appropriate program, agency or treatment center. ■

College of Fine Arts

A fond farewell... in prints



The Richmond Center for Visual Arts opened the exhibition "Farewell: Prints from the WMU Gwen Frostic School of Art University Permanent Collection" on April 27. It runs through May 27.

"Farewell" was curated by Richmond Center Director of Exhibitions Don Desmett, who retires from WMU in June after 30 years in higher education and the visual arts.

Desmett chose from an expansive collection of contemporary prints. Many artists featured emerged on the contemporary scene during Desmett's education and professional career—from Joseph Beuys' 1973 work "Democracy is Merry" to the latest addition to the collection, a 2015 work by the South African artist Haroon Gunn-Saile.

The exhibition gives a nod to other important prints in the collection, including Robert Rauschenberg's "Booster," Jennifer Bartlett's "Houses, Sol LeWitts Ten Thousand Straight Lines" and Leon Golub's "Why Me!"

The Richmond Center, now on summer hours, is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. ■

College of Arts and Sciences

Medieval Institute wins $180,000 grant to host summer institute

Schulman

Dr. Jana K. Schulman, professor of English and director of the Medieval Institute, has received a $180,000 award from the National Endowment of the Humanities to run a four-week medieval studies summer institute.

Schulman will work with guest lecturers in the fields of medieval archaeology, folklore and oral tradition, "Beowulf," Old Norse-Icelandic literature, and Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon religions.

College and university faculty members from across the United States apply to take part in National Endowment for the Humanities summer institutes.

"These NEH grants are great opportunities for Western Michigan University to affirm its commitment to the humanities and demonstrate its support for faculty members across the country engaged in such important liberal arts traditions and transmission," says Dr. Keith Hearit, interim arts and sciences dean. ■

College of Aviation

Aviation tech labs get significant upgrades

The college recently completed extensive upgrades to its power plant lab and tool room, the composite lab, and the structures lab in the Maintenance Training Center. These upgrades included refinished floors, the purchase of new tools and toolboxes, heavy training equipment, and Snap-On cabinets and work benches with stainless steel tops.

In the composite lab, students learn how to use composite materials to repair composite aircraft, such as the college's Cirrus planes and Boeing's 787. In the structures lab, faculty members teach students how aircraft structures are made and repaired. And the power plant lab is used to train students about aircraft engines.

College officials say that upgrades to these critical facilities reflect the quality of the aviation maintenance technician program at WMU and bring a renewed sense of pride to the college and its students.

To request a tour of these or any aviation facilities, call (269) 964-6375. ■

Lee Honors College

Successful series to return with focus on world water issues

The college recently completed a well-attended lecture series on water resources that will return this fall with a focus on global water problems and feature the renowned oceanographer Sylvia Earle as keynote speaker.

Titled "Our Blue Marble—Water, Home and Humanity," weekly programs constituted the spring component of the college's Lyceum Lecture series, which emphasized the Great Lakes region.

Particularly with the Flint, Michigan, crisis putting water issues into sharp relief, the series attracted many from on campus and beyond, says Jane Baas, the college's associate dean.

The talks were presented by a diverse group of faculty members as well as speakers from such organizations as the Michigan Environmental Council and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

To keep up with honors college events, visit wmich.edu/honors/events/lectures. ■

College of Education and Human Development

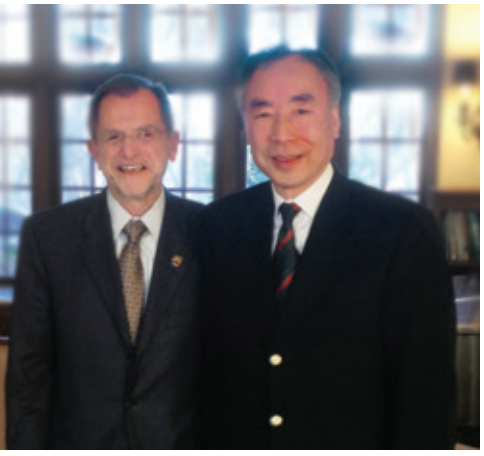
Counseling professor to edit prestigious journal

Vandiver

Dr. Beverly J. Vandiver, professor of counselor education and counseling psychology, has been appointed the incoming editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Black Psychology*.

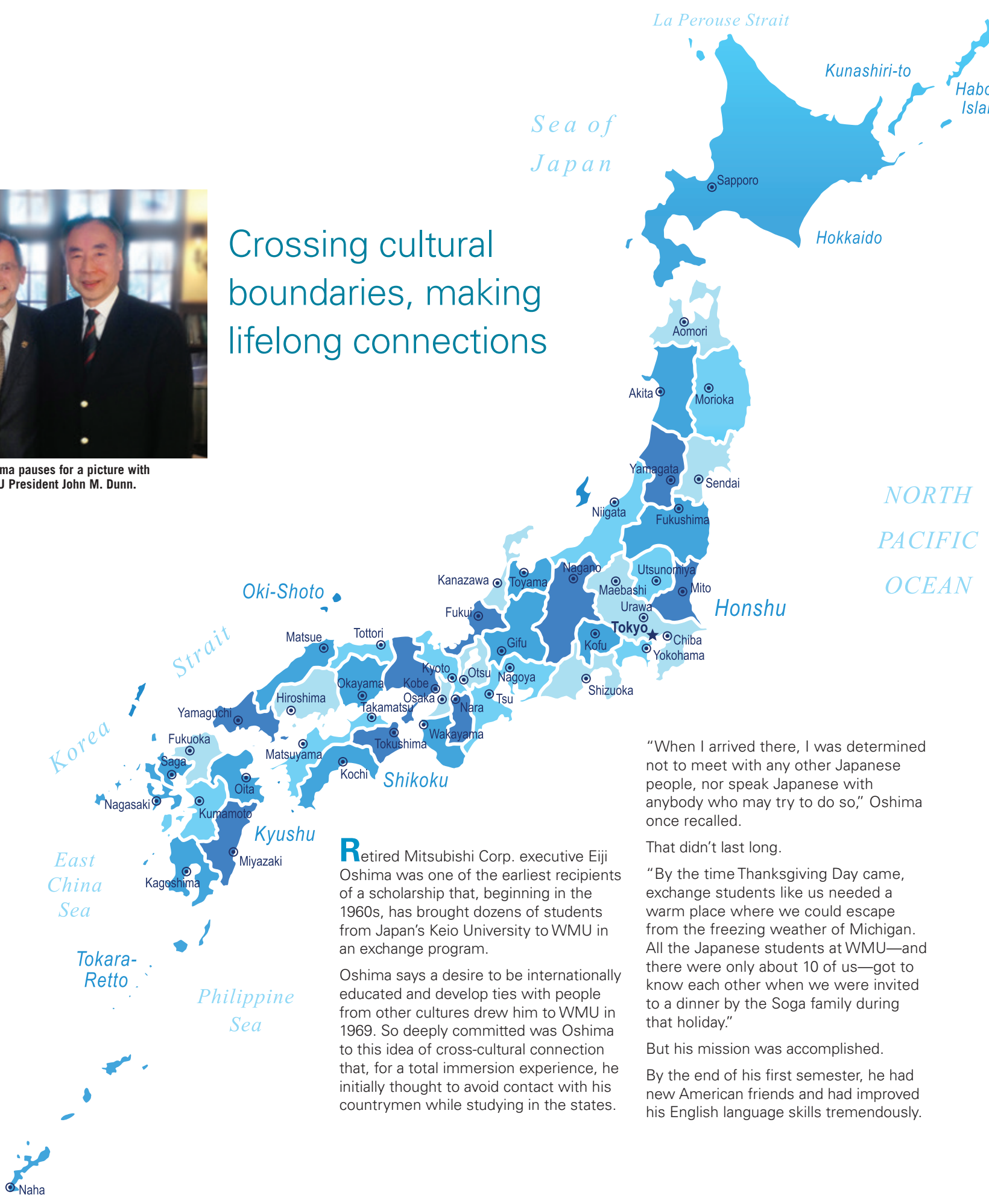
This premier journal focuses on such subjects as African-centered psychology, therapeutic interventions, psychology of black children, personality, education, and health and social behavior.

It is published by the Association of Black Psychology, the oldest ethnic psychology association in the United States. ■



Oshima pauses for a picture with WMU President John M. Dunn.

Crossing cultural boundaries, making lifelong connections



Retired Mitsubishi Corp. executive Eiji Oshima was one of the earliest recipients of a scholarship that, beginning in the 1960s, has brought dozens of students from Japan's Keio University to WMU in an exchange program.

Oshima says a desire to be internationally educated and develop ties with people from other cultures drew him to WMU in 1969. So deeply committed was Oshima to this idea of cross-cultural connection that, for a total immersion experience, he initially thought to avoid contact with his countrymen while studying in the states.

"When I arrived there, I was determined not to meet with any other Japanese people, nor speak Japanese with anybody who may try to do so," Oshima once recalled.

That didn't last long.

"By the time Thanksgiving Day came, exchange students like us needed a warm place where we could escape from the freezing weather of Michigan. All the Japanese students at WMU—and there were only about 10 of us—got to know each other when we were invited to a dinner by the Soga family during that holiday."

But his mission was accomplished.

By the end of his first semester, he had new American friends and had improved his English language skills tremendously.

He also found a mentor in physics Professor Michitoshi Soga, whom he considered a second father, as well as a cadre of companions from Japan, including his future wife.

Many of those relationships lasted decades, some to this day. This summer, they will be celebrated again.

Kalamazoo Kai, a 600-member group based in Tokyo that consists of WMU alumni and friends, will hold its Grand Reunion in June. Japan has one of WMU's most active alumni groups outside the United States.

Oshima, who today lives in Tokyo, says maintaining his WMU ties for nearly a half century has been a natural outgrowth of his affinity for the place and the people he met. After all, his decision to enroll led to a marriage with his late wife that lasted 42 years until her passing in 2012 and also to several Kalamazoo-forged friendships.

"I have been grateful to WMU all my life for accepting and sponsoring me for an exchange student," Oshima says.

"The two years at WMU led to a position at Mitsubishi Corp. in '73, and then to Harvard Business School in '78. So it's natural for me to be connected to WMU and Kalamazoo."

In 1969, Oshima arrived at WMU as a Yukiko Murakami scholar. This scholarship program was set up to honor Murakami, a Keio student who was studying abroad at WMU when she was killed in a motor vehicle crash in 1962. In all, 55 students from Keio and 43 WMU students have earned the study-abroad scholarship since it was established 53 years ago.

As the seventh beneficiary of the program, Oshima majored in economics, completing his undergraduate classes with honors—though he recalls sweating through a U.S. history course in which he ultimately earned an A. He also took graduate classes at the University.

"But my life at WMU was far richer than the academic records," he says.

Certain experiences stand out for Oshima, including developing such a tight

Oshima holds his grandson and a photo of his late wife.

friendship with his first roommate that he was best man at his friend's wedding, and later, defying stereotypes as well as larger societal tensions when he and an African-American student roomed together and bonded.

"At the time when racial conflicts were very strong everywhere, people might have thought that a black person and non-black person rooming might heighten the tension," he says.

It didn't. "We got along very well," says Oshima, who last saw this former roommate just six years ago.

Adding to this affinity for WMU was Soga. Soga is credited with developing and strengthening WMU's ties with several Japanese universities. While he was a physics professor and for years thereafter as an administrator in WMU's international affairs office, he hosted and mentored many Japanese students. The late professor and his wife Ryoko came to Kalamazoo about a year before Oshima.

"They were practically our parents in the USA," Oshima says. "Dr. Soga, Soga-Sensei as we called him, was the father for all the students and scholars who came from Japan to WMU."

During Oshima's tenure as chairman of Kalamazoo Kai, the group helped establish the Soga Japan Center at WMU by raising close to $200,000 for an endowment.

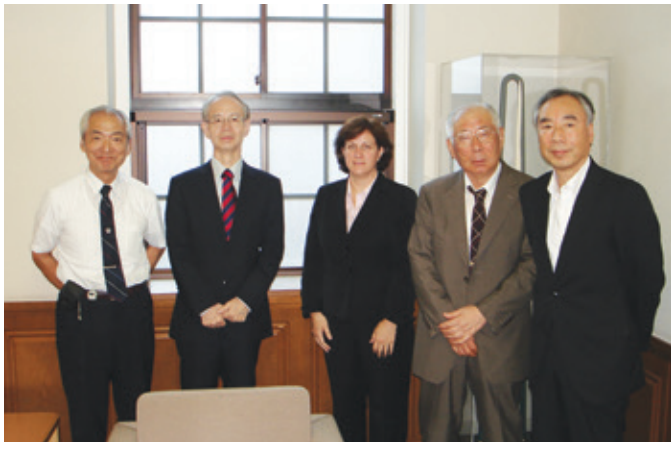
But Oshima's most life-altering moment at WMU came at Christmastime in 1969. He calls it his biggest accomplishment in life: "I fell in love in Kalamazoo and got married to Kiyoko," he says.

The two wed in Japan in 1973, a union that resulted in two children, their daughter Ryoko and son Yusei. Yusei and his wife Mei Lynn Huee are also alumni.

The same year the Oshimas married, Eiji Oshima began work as a coffee bean trader for Mitsubishi's food division. During a 38-year career, he held positions in some of the highest levels of the corporation, including as assistant to the president, leader of investor relations in another post and finally as a member of the audit and supervisory board.

Over those years, Oshima's continued openness to other countries and cultures meant he and Kiyoko lived in places across the globe, including in Brazil, the Netherlands and the United States. But it was his first study abroad experience at WMU that crystallized the value of living without limits in this way. He advises students today to do the same.

"Open your mind and heart to people you meet at WMU regardless of color and creed," he says. "Some of them will be your lifelong valuable assets. For that matter, open your mind to countries other than the USA. You will find them fascinating to know." ■



Oshima, far right, at an event with fellow former exchange students and officials from WMU and Keio universities.

Classnotes

Send submissions to: teresa.ventimiglia@wmich.edu. Include your name (first, middle, last, maiden), degree(s), year(s) graduated and a daytime phone number by which we can reach you. We will publish photos as space permits.

Woody Creason, BA '47, former economics professor at Indiana State University was honored with the creation of a lecture series in his name, the Woodrow Creason Memorial Lecture. Creason, who retired in 1991 after 35 years of service to the university, died in 2014.

Ceoria Coates, SC '49, a cancer survivor, was chosen as one of the faces of the American Cancer Society's "Advantage Humans" advertising campaign.

Thomas Penrod, BS '63, was inducted into the Colon (Michigan) High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He earned varsity letters in football, basketball and baseball and played football at WMU. Penrod was a golf coach at Lansing Eastern High School for 22 years.

Robert Ritsema, BS '64, MA '68, has retired after 45 years of coaching cross country at Brighton (Michigan) High School. He retired from teaching in 2004 and continued to coach part-time.

Steve Eckert, BS '66, recently celebrated 25 years of service with Bethany Christian Services in Holland, Michigan.

Richard M. Markoff, BA '68, has been named chair of the board of advisors for Indiana University's School of Nursing.

David I. Matson, MBA '70, has been appointed to the board of directors for Banner Corp., the holding company for Banner Bank and Islanders Bank, in Walla Walla, Washington.

Jim Scherrer, BS '72, has retired after 36 years of service to Child and Family Services of Northwestern Michigan in Traverse City, Michigan. His most recent position was chief executive officer.

John Schwartz, BA '72, has retired after 27 years of coaching varsity football at Mendon (Michigan) High School.

James Henry Boven, BS '73, recently retired after 41 years of teaching business education and coaching basketball and baseball at Timothy Christian High School in Elmhurst, Illinois.

J. Russell Hicks, BS '73, has received the Verlen Kruger Award, River Protection Pillar Award from the Middle Grand River Organization of Watersheds, and the 2015 Conservationist of the Year Award from the Eaton Conservation District for this effort in returning the rapids to Eaton Rapids on the Grand River. He is president of the Quiet Water Society.

Judy Kozonis Snider, BS '74, along with her husband, has released two new songs available on iTunes: "Invisible" and "Words I Just Can't Say."

William Lawrence "Larry" Shank, MA '75, has been appointed to the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division III Infractions Appeals Committee. He is the athletic director for Muskingum University in Concord, Ohio.

Mike Butterfield, BS '76, has founded Nature as Art, Art with a Heart, a nonprofit that markets wildlife and nature photographs to raise money for Harvest Missions in the Dominican Republic.

Phyllis Cupp, BS '76, MA '82, has been inducted into the Glen Oaks Community College Athletic Hall of Fame. She is a retired instructor and former director of the college's Fitness and Wellness Center.

Linda Rzoska, BS '76, recently won best in show for her mixed media artwork, titled "Recognition," in the Carnegie Center for the Arts 2016 Regional Juried Arts Competition in Three Rivers, Michigan.

Ladislav Hanka, BA '78, MFA '82, recently exhibited his mixed media art piece, "Visions of a Wandering Naturalist," in Preus Library at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Mark O'Connell, BS '78, MA '94, is the new president of Kellogg Community College in Battle, Creek, Michigan.

Ron Singleton, BS '78, is a new city commissioner for Benton Harbor, Michigan.

Kathy Tyler, BFA '78, created the winning design in a contest to develop a logo for Art Hops, a new craft brew created by Arcadia Brewing Co. in honor of monthly art exhibitions in downtown Kalamazoo known as Art Hop.

Rick Wilson, BS '78, is the recipient of the 2015 Al Cotton Award, an award presented to an individual who has made a positive impact on sports in the Jackson, Michigan, area. Wilson is chief operating officer of the Jackson YMCA.

Mark Flowers, MFA '79, is one of 18 artists chosen for the 2016 Golden Foundation Residency Program in New Berlin, New York. The program is designed to assist professional artists with discovering and exploring new materials and technologies.

Lisa Palanca, BS '79, is the founder and executive director of Palanca Leadership, a nonprofit organization dedicated to mentoring and educating youths and young adults in the Kalamazoo area.

John R. Carlson, BBA '81, has been promoted to an assistant vice presidential position at TLC Community Credit Union in Lenawee (Michigan) County.

Mary Jane Doerr, MA '81, has been appointed director of the Office for the Protection of Children and Youth for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Mary Graham, BA '81, MSW '86, is manager of community engagement for Great Lakes Health Connect in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Barbara Hopps, BSM '82, is a certified physician assistant for Borgess ProMed Family Medicine in its Portage and Three Rivers, Michigan, offices.

Angie G. Laskarides, BA '82, MA '84, is regional director for the Arizona Community Foundation, serving southeast Arizona.

David Brady, BBA '83, is the national accounts manager for UniCarriers America, a forklift manufacturer based in Marengo, Illinois.

Birgit Klohs, BBA '83, was awarded Davenport University's 2016 Peter C. Cook Excellence in Business Award during its Excellence in Business Gala in May, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Klohs is chief executive officer of The Right Place, a nonprofit regional business and economic development agency in Grand Rapids. She also formerly served on the WMU Board of Trustees.

Darrell Thornley, BSE '83, was recently awarded a patent for Secure Microgrid. The patent describes an engineering process for developing microgrids that includes both technical and economic considerations. Thornley is an energy efficiency and power generation consultant in Austin, Texas.

John Hallacy, BS '85, was appointed by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder to the Calhoun County Circuit Court bench.

Sharon A. Conran, BBA '86, has been promoted to vice president-trust relationship officer for Greenleaf Trust in Kalamazoo.

Blaine Koops, MPA '86, has retired as sheriff of Allegan County, Michigan.

Bob Hickman, BBA '87, MBA '93, has been promoted to chief credit officer for Community First Bank of Indiana in Kokomo.

Lauree K. Vanderveen, BBA '87, has been promoted to vice president-trust relationship officer for Greenleaf Trust in Kalamazoo.

Jeff Genyk, MBA '89, is the special teams coordinator and running backs coach for the Vanderbilt University Commodores football team in Nashville, Tennessee.

Brett Oberthaler, BS '89, recently completed a mural in Harlingen, Texas, titled "From Farm to Market Through Harlingen." He is an art teacher at Mercedes Early College High School.

Terry O'Rourke, BBA '90, MA '92, is the president and chief executive officer for United Federal Credit Union in St. Joseph, Michigan.

Christina L. Corl, BS '91, WMU Cooley '95, has joined Plunkett Cooney's labor and employment law practice group in its Columbus, Ohio, office.

Elyse Mirto, BFA '91, was nominated for the 2015 Ovation Award for lead actress in a play and the Broadway World Los Angeles Award for lead actress in a play.

Brett Pynnonen, BBA '91, is the vice president and general counsel for Visteon, a global company that designs, engineers and manufacturers cockpit electronics and connected car solutions headquartered in Van Buren Township, Michigan.

Sonja R. (Ebel) Navarro, BSM '92, is a physician assistant in the emergency department for the University of Florida Health Science Center/Shands hospitals in Jacksonville, Florida.

Janet Vail, MA '92, PhD '98, has been awarded the 2016 Informal Science Educator Award by the Michigan Science Teachers Association. She is a research scientist at Grand Valley State University's Annis Water Resources Institute in Muskegon, Michigan.

Don Archer, BS '93, is the regional account manager for Anderson & Vreeland's western U.S. market. A & V is a manufacturer and distributor of flexographic plate processing equipment and materials.

IN MEMORIAM

Jeanette (Smith) Garrison, BS '38, MA '64, MA '67, Feb. 13, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Mary L. (Maher) Schiavoni, BA '40, 2TC '42, Jan. 28, 2016, in Bradford, MA

Betty B. (Cromer) Falcone, BS '42, Dec. 5, 2015, in Haslett, MI

Leta C. (Cole) Schoenhals, BA '42, MA '58, EDS '65, Jan. 30, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Bette E. (Enyart) Stock, BS '43, Jan. 9, 2016, in Elkhart, IN

Carolyn L. (Adams) Burnett, TC '40, BS '45, Feb. 10, 2016, in Battle Creek, MI

Helen L. (Lixvar) Davidson, BS '45, Dec. 2, 2015, in Lansing, MI

Myron J. Sonnevil, BS '46, Jan. 5, 2016, in Naples, FL

Melvin K. Brown, BA '47, Dec. 1, 2015, in Big Rapids, MI

Raymond A. Percival, BA '47, 2TC '48, Jan. 5, 2016, in Rochester Hills, MI

John J. Pruis, BS '47, Jan. 15, 2016, in Muncie, IN

Shirley J. (Frederick) Brown, BS '48, Dec. 1, 2015, in Green Valley, AZ

Joe N. Crain, BS '48, Dec. 16, 2015, in Kalamazoo

Andrew Ness, BA '48, Dec. 22, 2015, in Falls Church, VA

Loel S. Newton, BS '48, Jan. 16, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Kent C. Freeland, BS '50, MA '56, Dec. 28, 2015, in Croswell, MI

Phyllis L. (Rutan) Humphrey, BS '50, Dec. 30, 2015, in Lynchburg, VA

Barbara (Bigelow) Jordan, BA '50, Dec. 20, 2015, in Pearland, TX

Calvin T. Magill, BS '50, Jan. 19, 2016, in Grosse Point, MI

Bruce A. Mallernee, BS '50, Feb. 2, 2016, in Battle Creek, MI

Francis L. Morse, BS '50, Jan. 31, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Daniel E. Payne, BA '50, Jan. 23, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Donald A. Snow, BS '50, Dec. 11, 2015, in Hart, MI

Georgia A. (Green) Gunning, BA '51, TC '55, MA '58, Dec. 21, 2015, in Mount Pleasant, MI

Raymond W. Norberg, BM '51, MA '56, Dec. 24, 2015, in Stevensville, MI

Merrill E. (Ed) Torrance, TC '50, BA '52, Feb. 8, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Joseph W. Brooks, BS '52, Dec. 24, 2015, in Dimondale, MI

W. James (Jim) Giddis, BS '52, MA '53, Jan. 21, 2016, in Park City, UT

Elizabeth A. (James) Roskam, BS '52, Feb. 10, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Richard J. Ziebell, BS '52, Dec. 28, 2015, in Battle Creek, MI

George L. Howe, BBA '53, Dec. 21, 2015, in The Villages, FL

William I. Kamm, BS '53, Jan. 24, 2016, in Grosse Point Woods, MI

Gloria J. (Phillipson) Mejeur, BA '53, Jan. 27, 2016, in Ocean Springs, MS

Lyle F. Shaw, BBA '53, Jan. 17, 2016, in Grand Rapids, MI

Christine Chamis, BA '54, Dec. 31, 2015, in Tucson, AZ

John E. Gellick, BS '54, Jan. 17, 2016, in Sarasota, FL

Lois H. Shields, BA '54, Jan. 12, 2016, in Fennville, MI

Louise (Darkey) Walbridge, BS '54, Jan. 20, 2016, in Augusta, MI

Gene V. Chute, BA '55, Dec. 20, 2015, in Lebanon, OH

Kimon G. Softas, BA '55, Dec. 4, 2015, in Kalamazoo

Charles F. Briggs, BA '56, Dec. 1, 2015, in Suttons Bay, MI

Maxine S. (Sherwood) Fuller, BS '56, MA '60, Jan. 23, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Robert M. Seger, BA '56, Jan. 12, 2016, in Clinton, IA

Sally A. (Wanenmacher) Skidmore, BS '56, Jan. 5, 2016, in Grandville, MI

Donald C. Hildebrandt, BS '57, Jan. 15, 2016, in Muskegon, MI

Ronald McNally, BS '58, Jan. 19, 2016, in Muskegon, MI

Raymond G. Berndt, BS '59, MA '62, Dec. 28, 2015, in Plainwell, MI

William W. Clementz, BS '59, Jan. 19, 2016, in Salmon, ID

Donna H. Northrup, BS '59, MA '64, Jan. 27, 2016, in Allegan, MI

Richard G. Pleyte, BBA '59, Dec. 5, 2015, in Galesburg, MI

Gordon D. Sheldon, BBA '59, Feb. 16, 2016, in Middleville, MI

Robert L. Gray, BM '60, MA '63, Jan. 24, 2016, in Sturgis, MI

Carl L. Awe, BBA '60, Nov. 16, 2015, in Kalamazoo

Thomas E. MacKenzie, BS '60, Feb. 12, 2016, in Glendale, AZ

Edwin R. Page, BA '60, Dec. 12, 2015, in Westland, MI

Sandra K. (Heckelbower) Brueck, BS '61, Jan. 8, 2016, in Three Rivers, MI

Larry D. VanderMolen, BA '61, MA '64, Dec. 3, 2015, in Muskegon, MI

Donald G. Clark, BS '62, Jan. 20, 2016, in Jackson, MI

Burton R. Corbus, MA '62, Dec. 20, 2015, in Sarasota, FL

Vera J. (Warren) Gast, BS '62, Feb. 16, 2016, in St. Joseph, MI

Helen E. (Paul) Zetterholm, BA '62, MLS '67, Dec. 1, 2015, in Charlotte, MI

Willodean H. (Zollman) Beckwith, MA '63, Jan. 1, 2016, in Sturgis, MI

John H. Belson, BA '63, Jan. 15, 2016, in Grand Blanc, MI

Sally A. (Collinge) Flejszar, BA '63, MA '80, Dec. 7, 2015, in Muskegon, MI

Charles W. Wright, BS '63, MA '68, Feb. 12, 2016, in Fort Myers, FL

George A. Emerick, BS '64, Jan. 2, 2016, in Saginaw, MI

Emma I. (Moore) Moragne, BS '64, MA '67, Jan. 22, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Beryl E. (Wachter) Mudget, BS '64, Feb. 8, 2016, in Ludington, MI

Thomas H. Worswick, BS '64, Jan. 5, 2016, in Clemmons, NC

Chris Meyers, BBA '93, is the new chief financial officer and an executive vice president for SpartanNash, a worldwide food distributor and supermarket operator based in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Diane Penning, MM '94, a soprano, recently performed with the Adrian (Michigan) Symphony Orchestra in a concert titled "My Favorite Things."

Mesale Solomon, BS '95, is senior vice president and chief people officer in the Georgia office of IFG Companies insurance group.

Jim Elmquist, MPA '96, is the city administrator for Crest Hill, Illinois.

Amy Geil-Susan, BBA '96, has been appointed to the board of directors for Animal Rescue Project in Kalamazoo. She is an account executive for Kalamazoo-based Promotion Concepts Inc.

Michael Manion, BS '96, is the community relations director for the city of Southfield, Michigan.

Elizabeth Skidmore, BS '96, was selected to receive a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. She is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Pittsburgh.

Bonnie Bochniak, BA '98, MPA '05, is the state relations director for Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.

Mark A. Trexler, BA '98, is the chair of social studies for University High School Academy in Southfield, Michigan. He published his first middle-grade novel, "Black Iron," in 2015.

Jeff Banaszak, MBA '99, is the director of finance for Creative Dining Services in Zeeland, Michigan.

Dan Crabtree, BBA '99, is the managing director for Meritor, a heavy vehicle systems and accessories manufacturer in Australia.

Joe Jankord, BS '00, is senior director of supply chain for BAE Systems, a worldwide defense, security and aerospace company. He has bases in Louisville, Kentucky, and Arlington, Virginia.

Colleen Mouw, BS '00, was selected to receive a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. She is an assistant professor in the Department of Geological and Mining Engineering and Sciences at Michigan Technological University.

Laura Murphy, BA '00, is director of public relations and social media for Little Dog Agency, a marketing, public relations, advertising and production firm in Charleston, South Carolina.

Brian Brown, BS '01, is the business manager of the River Valley School District in Three Oaks, Michigan.

Deborah Higgins, BA '01, MA '08, has been promoted to vice president of program for the Fetzer Institute in Kalamazoo.

Scott Richard Rolando, BS '01, has been awarded Citizen of the Year by the Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce. He is a biology teacher and student activities director at Lakeland High School in White Lake, Michigan. Rolando also volunteers and serves the greater Huron Valley Community.

Ryan Blanck, BBA '02, is a recipient of Sigma Phi Epsilon's 2015 40 Under 40 award. He is founder and chief executive officer of Deviate, a performance coaching firm headquartered in Brentwood, Tennessee.

Mira Ptacin, BA '02, has written a new book titled "Poor Your Soul," a memoir and coming-of-age story.

Tiffani N. Williams, BS '02, MA '03, has joined Weltman, Weinberg & Reis Co., LPA, in its Detroit office.

Yvonne VanWormer, BS '03, has joined TowerPinkster in Kalamazoo. She is a senior interior designer with a specialty in furniture layout for the commercial and health care markets.

Kevin Wordelman, BA '03, MPA '13, is the director of people and culture for the Kalamazoo Nature Center.

Eddie Ostipow, MA '04, is the head varsity football coach for Greenville (Michigan) High School.

Monica McFawn Robinson, MFA '05, has received a $25,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. She is an author and assistant professor of English at Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

Benjamin Sobczak, BS '05, has joined Dickinson Wright PLLC in its Troy, Michigan, office.

Kristen Tracy, PhD '05, has written her 11th book, the first in a series of middle-grade novels titled "Project [Un]popular," published by Random House.

Jennifer Nemecek, BA '06, is the vice president and treasury management officer for First National Bank of Michigan, providing services to customers in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids.

Amanda Pung, MSM '06, is a certified physician assistant for Bronson Lakeview Family Care in Decatur, Michigan.

Crystal Suuppi, BS '06, is a customer support representative for Forensic Fluids Laboratories in Kalamazoo.

Michael Frey, BBA '07, has joined Kalamazoo's Forensic Fluids Laboratories logistics department.

Jae Green, BS '07, MSM '10, is a physician assistant for Bronson HealthCare Midwest Orthopedics & Joint Specialists in Kalamazoo.

Andrew L. Riker, MBA '07, has been promoted to vice president-wealth management advisor for Greenleaf Trust in Kalamazoo.

Christopher J. Ryan, BBA '07, is a shareholder with Giarmarco, Mullins & Horton PC in Troy, Michigan. He is part of the firm's litigation practice group.

Jaclyn J. Schmidt, BBA '07, MSA '08, is manager of accounting and auditing for Brink, Key & Chludzinski PC in Portage, Michigan.

Molly Korinek, BA '08, has joined Forensic Fluids Laboratories in the Kalamazoo company's customer support department.

Hannah Elless, BFA '09, is playing a supporting role in Steve Martin's Broadway production of Bright Star.

Ryan Long, BSE '09, has been promoted to group vice president for CMS Group in Kalamazoo.

Joyce Pines, MA'10, has been promoted to clinical director of adult services for Community Healing Centers in Kalamazoo.

Robert Arnheim, BA '12, is the receivers coach for the South Dakota State University football team.

Mark S. Barajas, MA '12, PhD '15, has accepted a tenure-track faculty position as an assistant professor of clinical psychology at Saint Mary's College of California in Moraga.

Adam Carpp, BS '12, is an engineer for American Cooler Technologies in Lawrence, Michigan.

Kelly Duncheskie, BBA '12, has joined the customer support team at Forensic Fluids Laboratories in Kalamazoo.

Courtney Elizabeth Young, BA '12, has published her first book "Summit," in her "Define the Great Line" trilogy. The books are her fictionalized memoir of physical and sexual abuse.

Kurt Bindus, BA '13, is an Ionia County (Michigan) sheriff's deputy.

Jared Jarvis, BA '13, is the co-founder of the Huron Acting Club in Port Huron, Michigan.

Chris Tarkowski, MBA '13, is a senior manger of client services for Zhang Financial in Kalamazoo.

Mary Connolly, BA '14, second lieutenant in the Michigan National Guard, is the first female artillery officer assigned to an artillery battery, the Albion, Michigan-based Carlie Battery.

Xiang Li, MSA '14, has joined Forensic Fluids Laboratories in its accounting department in Kalamazoo.

Lea Burrows-Brian, MSM '15, a certified physician assistant, has joined Bronson Orthopedic Specialists in Marshall, Michigan.

Luke Dusellier, BA '15, is a police officer for the Sterling Heights (Michigan) Police Department.

Jordan Nieboer, BSE '15, is a manufacturing engineer for Humphrey Products Co. in Kalamazoo.

Alec Palmer Wyman, BBA '15, is a global food programs marketing coordinator for NFS International in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Marlin G. Bensinger, BS '65, MS '70, Jan. 21, 2016, in Hobe Sound, FL

Leslie E. Dodson, MA '65, Dec. 2, 2015, in Kalamazoo

Harvey V. Dougherty, BBA '65, Jan. 16, 2016, in St. Charles, MO

Thomas I. Johnson, BS '65, Jan. 16, 2016, in San Antonio, TX

Raymond E. Masnari, BBA '65, Dec. 17, 2015, in Three Rivers, MI

Rhea G. Wilkes, BS '65, MA '70, Dec. 6, 2015, in Bellevue, MI

Gerald L. Barefield, BBA '66, Feb. 2, 2016, in St. Joseph, MI

Ronald J. Davis, BBA '66, MBA '73, Dec. 23, 2015, in Stuart, FL

Peter Lubben, MA '66, Jan. 24, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Donald G. Bachman, BBA '67, Jan. 29, 2016, in Creve Coeur, MS

Shirley A. (Cane) Carlsen, BS '67, Feb. 10, 2016, in Punta Gorda, FL

Donald E. Newman, BS '67, Jan. 25, 2016, in Shelbyville, IN

Carol S. (Kolhoff) Christner, BS '68, Jan. 2, 2016, in Berrien Springs, MI

Alice M. (Tim) Gamble, BS '68, MA '72, Jan. 23, 2016, in Centreville, MI

Clara M. Kollar, BS '68, Dec. 23, 2015, in Fennville, MI

Linda A. Oesterle, MA '78, Dec. 29, 2015, in Marshall, MI

Quinten E. Ward, MBA '68, Feb. 11, 2016, in Denver, CO

Joseph G. Foy, BA '69, Feb. 4, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Dennis J. Griffin, BS '69, Dec. 18, 2015, in St. Petersburg, FL

Terry L. Lason, BA '69, MLS '72, Feb. 15, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Carl C. Nisbet, MA '69, Dec. 29, 2015, in South Haven, MI

Steven E. Perkins, BA '69, MA '71, Dec. 12, 2015, in Winchester, VA

Linda A. Schulz, BS '69, Oct. 9, 2015, in Hinsdale, IL

Steven P. Singleton, MA ', BA '69, Dec. 31, 2015, in Ann Arbor, MI

Norma J. (Bates) Westphal, BA '69, MA '80, Jan. 13, 2016, in Three Rivers, MI

Robert P. Antol, BS '70, Dec. 11, 2015, in Deland, FL

John C. Dahm, BS '70, Dec. 8, 2015, in Wyoming, MI

Janice L. (Quinby) Hewes, BA '70, Dec. 18, 2015, in Fresno, CA

Gary G. Kraus, BS '70, Jan. 7, 2016, in Fort Worth, TX

Roger D. Lowe, MA '70, Feb. 16, 2016, in Huntertown, IN

Patrick N. O'Connell, BBA '70, Feb. 9, 2016, in Bradenton, FL

Nancy J. (McPherson) Conn, BS '71, Feb. 8, 2016, in Traverse City, MI

James A. Majzel, BS '71, Dec. 9, 2015, in Owosso, MI

Louise W. Humphreys, BA '72, MA '77, Feb. 19, 2016, in Muskegon, MI

Renee T. (Karmeisool) Pastoor, BS '72, Dec. 1, 2015, in Muskegon, MI

Ada J. Diekelman, MA '73, Jan. 28, 2016, in Plover, WI

James H. Hilbrecht, BM '73, Dec. 3, 2015, in Kalamazoo

Jonathan W. Mills, BA '73, Jan. 27, 2016, in Bloomington, IN

James P. Nienhuis, MSW '73, Jan. 29, 2016, in Grand Rapids, MI

Douglas W. White, BS '73, MA '76, Feb. 15, 2016, in Caldwell, ID

Andrew J. Phillips, BS '74, Feb. 6, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Janis P. Baltmanis, BSE '75, Jan. 1, 2016, in Paw Paw, MI

Richard W. McGrew, BS '75, MPA '80, Jan. 15, 2016, in Williamsburg, VA

Mary L. Morris, BS '75, Dec. 7, 2015, in Battle Creek, MI

Michael Larry Renfro, BBA '75, Feb. 6, 2016, in Neosho, MS

Robert R. Rice, BBA '75, Dec. 11, 2015, in Ceresco, MI

Lowell G. Smith, MA '75, Dec. 20, 2015, in Willmar, MN

Robert W. Hampton, BS '76, MA '87, Feb. 20, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Mary L. Nye, BS '76, Feb. 20, 2016, in Battle Creek, MI

Marie L. (Garrett) Champion, BS '77, Jan. 9, 2016, in Plainwell, MI

Mark K. Knust, BBA '77, Jan. 19, 2016, in Fort Gratiot, MI

Marilyn S. McNicholas, BBA '77, Dec. 8, 2015, in La Crescenta, CA

Glenadine J. (Masters) Tiller, BFA '77, MA '82, Feb. 7, 2016, in Battle Creek, MI

Bonnie J. (Cooley) McCarthy, BA '78, Dec. 20, 2015, in Munising, MI

Kathleen M. Williams, BS '78, Jan. 18, 2016, in Mattawan, MI

Vincent B. Szymanski, BS '79, Dec. 19, 2015, in Traverse City, MI

Gregory Johnson, BS '80, Dec. 9, 2015, in Louisville, GA

Mary J. Nye, BA '80, Feb. 20, 2016, in Battle Creek, MI

Bradley E. Kenny, BS '81, Dec. 11, 2015, in Phuket, Thailand,

Sarah L. (Greg) Stoppel, BS '87, Jan. 2, 2016, in Charlevoix, MI

Ronald L. Blanke, BS '88, Feb. 11, 2016, in Kalamazoo

Monica O. (Froeschke) Luderer, MA '88, Jan. 11, 2016, in Portage, MI

Steven R. Cartwright, MA '92, PhD '01, Dec. 17, 2015, in Kalamazoo

Stephen C. Miller, BA '96, MA '02, Dec. 20, 2015, in Stevensville, MI

Jane M. Lago, BA '97, Jan. 10, 2016, in Kalamazoo

John W. White, MA '98, Feb. 3, 2016, in Battle Creek, MI

FACULTY

Anthony A. Gioia, professor emeritus of mathematics, Jan. 4, 2016, in Augusta, MI

Robert Jack Smith, professor emeritus of anthropology, Jan. 31, 2016, in Scotts, MI

Lambert R. VanderKooi, professor emeritus of electrical and computer engineering, Nov. 17, 2015, in Kalamazoo

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"Freedom Dance"
New WMU alumnus Johnson Simon created this emotive work. Learn more about his life and talent on page 10.